

# AMERICA

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

FEBRUARY 3, 1940

## WHO'S WHO

ETIENNE GILSON holds the premiership among the Catholic philosophers of France. He is quite as well known in learned centers of the English-speaking world as he is in the French-speaking countries. At present, he is delivering a course of lectures at the Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto, Ont. He is the director of the department of Medieval Philosophy at the Sorbonne, Paris. His treatises are many and impressive, undoubtedly the most masterful commentaries on philosophy written in our times. M. Gilson is welcomed to our pages, however, not as a medievalist, not as a controversialist, but as an expositor of a contemporary condition. His nation is at war. His people wish for peace. He speaks the convictions of his countrymen. . . . FRIEDRICH BAERWALD has been professor of economics, Graduate School, Fordham University, N. Y., since 1935. For seven years following 1926, he served in the Ministry of Labor of Germany. He has written much on economics and sociology for the leading German and American periodicals. Professor Baerwald also looks at this European conflict in which his people are involved. Like M. Gilson, he deplores it; and like the French, he attests, the Germans prefer peace. . . . ARNOLD LUNN is known to our readers and is well respected by them and the thousands of Americans whom he addressed in his lecture tours. In his characteristic manner, he presents the view of the intelligent Englishman in regard to a war that he detests, equally with M. Gilson and Dr. Baerwald.

THE articles in this symposium represent the views of the authors, not necessarily of the editors.

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# COMMENT

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FOR some time the State of North Carolina has enjoyed the unenviable distinction of possessing the first tax-supported birth-control program in the United States. New York State can now claim similar laurels, since the establishment has been announced of the first publicly financed birth-control clinic in the State, at Middletown, N. Y. After several years of private operation, the clinic claimed to be sponsored by the Middletown Board of Health and to enjoy the service of one public-health nurse. Varying accounts produced confusion as to the extent of this sponsorship. This "public" endorsement of birth control was announced with exultation at a recent meeting of the New York State Birth Control Federation. Catholic opposition to artificial contraception was bitterly attacked by Dr. Roy Norton of the School of Medicine, University of North Carolina, who condemned "vows of celibacy" and the opposition to "planned parenthood" shown by a "celibate-controlled group." Speakers, curiously enough, insisted that "birth control"—which with them always means artificial contraception and none other—must somehow include among its "objectives" those economic and social services which will make it possible for families to rear "at least three or four children." The attempt to cloak an intrinsically anti-social practice with the virtuous mantle of social reform is an unwitting confession of the logical weakness of the birth-control advocates' own arguments.

money for an essentially atheistic and immoral purpose? If this is their choice, they should at least be frank enough to state it.

THAT sterling, industrious patriot, George Seldes, highly commended by another active citizen, Harold Ickes for keeping the press from the foul influences of capitalism, is hereby recommended for the "sucker" press prize for 1940. The prize is awarded annually to the crusaders for right and purity who manifest the greatest innocence and naivete in our hard-fact, competitive, bourgeois civilization. Mr. Seldes' gem of naive innocence or ignorance, opens his current *New Masses* article with this remarkable statement: "In thirty-one years' journalism, I have never witnessed such a universal, concentrated and intentional campaign of lying as that conducted by the press and radio in the month of December, 1939, against the Soviet Government, its Army and its people." While it may seem early and foolhardy at this stage to give the award to Mr. Seldes, we feel secure that, at worst, there will be only a division of the award necessitated by any future contributions during the current year. Mr. Seldes has a head start and we feel his ardent crusading for truth and justice should not be deferred. One might well ask on what planet Mr. Seldes sojourned during the late trouble in Spain with its record of anti-Franco bias in the press. But this would only serve to introduce debate and discussion to a perfectly clear issue of the great publicity betrayal of December, 1939. So without further delay or ado, step up, Georgie, and receive your well deserved prize for that forthright opening statement of yours in the *New Masses*.

A SINISTER note in these proceedings was the attempt to cleave American citizens sharply asunder in their community life. The work of the New York State Birth Control Federation is in direct and radical opposition to that of all the groups who are striving for civic harmony and a better understanding among citizens. At no time has such understanding been more needed than at the present time and by no one agency is it being more effectively sabotaged than by the activities of this Federation. The Catholic position on birth control is not, as is constantly misrepresented, an attempt to impose a specifically "Catholic" idea upon the community. The Catholic position is that artificial contraception is an essentially anti-social practice, destructive of man's physical existence, destructive of elementary social bonds. The Catholic condemns birth control as an evil inimical to humanity and to our nation's life, not simply as inimical to the Church. Regardless of what any individual Catholic may say or do, the Church's position will not alter, since the Church herself cannot make wrong into right, nor change man's nature. The birth-control advocates face, therefore, a decision. Do they wish to sabotage the community's good will and kindle flames of social warfare by seizing the taxpayers'

AMERICANS in Buenos Aires and parts South are not especially popular since negotiations for a trade agreement between Argentina and the United States came to an abrupt conclusion. Argentina, through its press, flatly lays the blame on Washington and, when one considers the situation impartially, perhaps rightly. We allowed ourselves to be jockeyed into a false position. After all, Argentina depends on two commodities with which to do her marketing, meat and grain. Unless she can exchange her surplus for things we are advantageously equipped to provide her, she cannot do business. But Argentina could no more dream of buying wheat and beef from us than we from her, for our market, too, is glutted with farm products. The Administration will not outrage the farmer in this election year as it did when army contracts for Argentine canned meat were let some time ago. A hue and cry was heard all over the farm belt, and no such mistake will be made just now even by Mr.

Hull, chief promoter of Latin American trade-agreement policy. These facts were known to the negotiators before the trade parleys began. As a matter of record, after Argentina's announcement of her import policy of November 20, 1939, that she would restrict her foreign purchases, as far as possible, to her best customers, Great Britain and France, the impossibility of our getting anywhere became obvious. We do not blame Argentina, but that is where we should have withdrawn. It looks as though our neighbor stole a diplomatic march on us by prolonging negotiations until we were engineered into the unpopular position of appearing responsible for the fiasco. We hope that the State Department's face is red.

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EARL BROWDER asserts boldly that he is a Communist and proud of it. Being a Communist may be no compliment to his heart or to his head. Being proud of his Communism may be a reliable index of his Americanism; but his public avowal of his stand in the matter detracts in no way from his courage. There is always something admirable in a man who sticks to his guns even when they begin to backfire. Browder and his fellow fanatics in the Party must look with contempt on all their fair-weather friends who fell all over one another in their flight for cover when their own little water pistols began to splash back on them. They should have had the courage to face the storm as avowed friends of Communism or to come out boldly and honestly and admit that they were wrong, that they were duped, that they had deliberately closed their eyes to the truth. Most of them did no such thing. They merely continued to prate of liberty and democracy, denying vigorously that they ever helped the cause. Out of pure love born of admiration for his courage, we suggest to Earl that he forget all about Congress and go quietly to jail. We fear that he may be corrupted in Washington. Besides, once behind the bars, he will be safe for a while at least from any efforts Stalin might make to punish him for his bungling.

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EQUALLY as courageous as Browder's open avowal and certainly more intelligent is the complete and very humble retraction of the Reverend John Haynes Holmes. In discussing "Why Liberals Went Wrong on the Russian Revolution," he said, according to the *New York Times*:

If we liberals were right on certain single aspects of the Russian Revolution, we were wrong, disgracefully wrong on the question as a whole. . . . We permitted ourselves to condone wrongs that we knew to be wrong. We consented to violations of principles that we knew to be fatal to the moral integrity of mankind. . . . We defended or at least apologized for evils in the case of Russia which horrified us wherever else they appeared. . . . We found explanations for the Bolshevik concentration camps and exile prisons which outdid the worst horrors of Siberia in the days of the Tsars. . . . We defended the purges.

A strong indictment, but not overdrawn. A courageous indictment, since it is the man who indicts himself. If every one of the "liberals" guilty of the

same charges were to say an honest *mea culpa* for the whole list, then we might really feel that, even when wrong, they were thoroughly sincere; we might feel that Communist agitation of the last few years was not an unmixed evil.

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ALL the organized agencies of the Catholic Church in the United States do not succeed in contributing more than \$300,000 per annum to the work of bringing the Catholic Church to the 13,000,000 Negroes of this country, less than half of whom register any church affiliations, and of these, a bare 300,000 are Catholics. This, notes the Rev. John T. Gillard, of the Society of St. Joseph, who writes in the February *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, is less than three cents apiece, the price of a daily newspaper, for the individual Catholic of America. The price of an immortal soul is set at less than that of a bit of chewing gum. The annual collection for the Negro and Indian Missions, which occurs at the beginning of Lent, offers the prime opportunity to erase so grave a reproach on the Faithful of our nation. Dioceses, which not so long ago were supported by the contributions of pious Catholics in France, Germany and Austria, might well make return by lending a hand to this, the most appalling piece of mission neglect in our land. The fearful impoverishment of the Negro in the towns and cities where the bulk of this mission work is now conducted renders this year a particular point to the appeal. Yet the Church's mission work is itself helping to make the Negro more self-supporting.

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BROTHERHOOD among Americans, it is said, has become a national necessity. Divisive and subversive influences which undermine our national unity should be counteracted. To further this idea, Catholics are asked to take part in Brotherhood Week, February 18 to 25, as a civic observance "to create justice, amity, understanding and cooperation among Protestants, Catholics and Jews." The Catholic response to such an invitation is that, as Catholics, we favor all that will bring about unity and cooperation for worthy ends among the citizens of the community. Without such unity and cooperation our nation cannot continue to exist. For Catholics, it is particularly satisfying to see that along with the increasing demand for expressions of brotherhood there appears to be, at least among the more thinking element, an increasing understanding that there can be no true brotherhood without belief in God and a recognition of His Divine law as the guide to human life. Bitter experience has shattered the notion that "fraternity" can be built upon the mere sentiments of a glorified humanity. God, Who made humankind, alone has the secret for human fellowship. Those who violate His Law, even in the secret of their private, personal practices, are as much the enemies of civic brotherhood as the bomb-thrower and the hater-monger. Brotherhood Week offers an excellent opportunity for religious men and women to proclaim these truths to their fellow Americans.

# A FRENCH VIEW OF THE WAR

ETIENNE GILSON

IN inviting me to analyze for American readers "the motives and the aims of France in the present disastrous tragedy," AMERICA has done me both the service of clearly delimiting my task and the honor of trusting that I would adhere to it. I shall not discuss, therefore, such general problems as the abstract possibility, or impossibility, of a just war in modern times. I do not even intend to prove that the French are right in their conviction that this war is a lawful one, but simply to analyze the reasons why they think they are right. I quite agree that these are two altogether distinct propositions.

## FRANCE GROWS WATCHFUL

As the French see it, this war is the long awaited outcome of an international situation which began to take shape when, on February 24, 1920, the first great mass demonstration of the National Socialist Party took place in Munich. Nazism, to call it by its shorter name, was not entirely new. Its rise can be explained partly as a result of the World War, partly as a revival of pan-Germanism, which was not an effect of the World War, but one of its causes. Yet, from what could already be guessed of it from the man behind it, the new party was strongly suggestive of probable international complications wherein France would certainly be involved. For when things of this nature get going in Germany, the French usually stop, look and listen.

A Frenchman born in 1860 is now eighty years of age, a goodly age indeed; but he is living through his third Franco-German War, which is a goodly number too. Hundreds of thousands of French soldiers are now fighting their second war against Germany, and they vividly remember what France looked like at the end of the first one. When, in 1915, I first saw from a hilltop near Verdun the wound cut by the German trenches across the soil of my own country, I immediately recalled a sentence from my very first lessons in French geography, the one sentence which I have never forgotten. As our teacher, Father Lebel, was pointing out on the map the mountain passes of Argonne, he casually remarked: "This is the way the Prussians follow when they invade France."

Just cold facts, and I know they prove nothing, but they may help outsiders to understand why, when Adolf Hitler made his twenty-five points acclaimed by an audience of almost two thousand, the French began to watch this new movement and to be seriously interested.

In order that we may better understand the French reaction to Nazism, we must first take into

consideration if not what the Germans actually are, at least what their French neighbors commonly think they are. Were I to sum up this common French opinion in my own way, I should say that the Germans are that nation whose greatest poet has thus emended the initial words of the Gospel of Saint John: *In the beginning was the Deed*—a difference of a word but a world of difference. The Germans can make anything out of practically anything, and they make it to perfection—a cheap pencil, synthetic sugar, coffee, a dirigible, the Ninth Symphony or any conceivable system of metaphysics. Moreover, the Germans can also do anything they have a mind to do, because Germany is that country where, wherever there is a will, there are thousands of ways. In short, as we see it in her daily life as well as in her philosophy, Germany is the land of the primacy of the will.

## HITLER KNOWS HIS MIND

This tremendous will is fascinating to observe in its operations. Once that will has decreed its end, it sets about planning the ways and means to reach that end; then it broadcasts itself to the whole world as a solemn warning to all not to interfere with the German will or the German ways. It thus becomes a law promulgated to men *ut sint inexcusabiles*, and, because they are inexcusable, those who infringe that law must expect to be punished. Any refusal to bow to the promulgated German will is an open attack and aggression on Germany, because the self-assertion of her will is also its self-justification.

Whether we are right or wrong in thus understanding our Eastern neighbors, I am not prepared to say; but we do, and that is why, every time Germany begins to broadcast her will, we look for trouble ahead. That trouble usually comes, as it came last year for Poland, "justly" punished for having refused Germany the unconditional return of Danzig to the Reich. Indeed, Poland had been duly warned: either say yes and go to a bloodless death as wise Czechoslovakia did, or say no and be slaughtered. Poland said no; Poland has been slaughtered.

What makes it more difficult for the French not to take such warnings seriously is—surprising as it may seem—that we usually believe as true what the Germans say. Far from subscribing to the wide-spread opinion that they often lie, I, personally, hold them to be one of the most trustworthy nations in the world. The only difficulty arises from the very clearness and the outspoken sincerity with which they publicly announce their world-wide

schemes, schemes which, because we have not the German will, appear to most men as unbelievable. As they cannot even understand the abstract possibility of such plans, they do not take them seriously. But we do because we know that *nothing* appears as impossible to the German will, and that when a German says he wills something, he usually means it. Hitler means what he says.

#### HITLER'S MAP OF EUROPE

We have known what Hitler wanted almost from the very beginning of his career. The ultimate goal of Nazi Germany is perfectly simple and clear. When Hitler says, at the end of *Mein Kampf*, that "Germany must inevitably win its rightful place on this earth," he simply means that the German State "must some day be master of the world." (*Mein Kampf*, P. 994. Reynal and Hitchcock) This is plain speaking, but I am sure that not one out of ten of my American readers believes it, so plain is Hitler's speaking. We, on the contrary, work on the assumption that he means business because, though we ourselves may fail to imagine how such a thing could possibly be done, we feel sure that he would not broadcast his will unless he had already planned his means.

When Hitler announced to the world the rise of a Reich of two hundred and fifty million Germans, many a wise man smiled at him as at a crank. When they refused to believe him, he printed for them the map of his future empire. But because half of Europe happened to be included in it, those same wise men took the map as another poor joke. Now that Europe is beginning to look very much like the Hitlerian map, they begin to wonder if it was a joke after all. But they still do not believe that he really means to make Germany the master of the world. They do not believe it because *he has not yet achieved it*. Which is quite true. Yet, he is doing it and since France is next door to Germany, we cannot afford to wait much longer to make sure whether or not he is going ahead with his worldwide scheme. We know he is because we see it, and we know what he will do next because he has said it.

#### HITLER DOOMS FRANCE

It is, indeed, one of the very first things Hitler said, and his words could not possibly have escaped the ear of the country which he himself once called "the mortal enemy of our nation, France." (*Mein Kampf*, P. 964.) From a Hitlerian point of view this is perfectly true. Granting that the ultimate aim of Nazi Germany is world hegemony, the first serious stumbling block in Germany's path to her goal is undoubtedly France. Consequently, the mortal enemy of Germany is France. In other words, France either has to yield to the German decision to conquer Europe or be destroyed. As she cannot yield to it without herself being conquered, she will necessarily refuse to do so; consequently, the same fate which awaited rebellious Poland is in store for France, and France has to be destroyed.

The unforgivable crime of France in this story is her unwillingness not to be a cog in the German wheel; "Much as we all recognize the necessity of a reckoning with France, it will remain largely ineffective if our foreign-policy aim is restricted thereto. It has [retained] and will retain significance if it provides the rear cover for an enlargement of our national domain of life in Europe." (*Mein Kampf*, P. 949) What makes the Hitlerian "vital space" so interesting to a Frenchman is that he himself is in it.

Fortunately for the rest of the world, things do not always work according to Hitler's plans. His first idea had been to strike an alliance with England and Italy, then to dispose of France, after which he could see his road clear to the marvelous "vital spaces" of central Europe, including the Ukraine and what not. For reasons best known to herself, England simply refused to be a party to such an agreement.

#### THE PROCESS OF ENSLAVEMENT

Among the worst shortcomings of the marvelous German will is the lack of psychological feelings. Hitler has good fists but no antennae. After thus achieving the masterpiece of creating between England and France such an alliance as has never yet existed between any two nations—for England and France are not now two nations, but one—Hitler had necessarily to alter his plans. The idea of a reckoning with France alone had always been a pleasant one to him, but a reckoning with both France and England was a much less interesting proposition. Hence his new plan to go ahead with the conquest of central Europe, with the hope that neither England nor France would ever take up arms merely to help small nations in whose fate they were not vitally interested.

A daring scheme, indeed, but so good a one that it very nearly succeeded. Hitler knew, and *had said it ahead of time*, that if he could make England and France swallow his first territorial extortion, they would not mind so much swallowing the succeeding ones until their own time finally came to be themselves swallowed up. In an enlightening passage wherein he develops a principle posited by Clausewitz, Hitler has thus described for his future victims the subtleties of his technique:

An intelligent victor will, whenever possible, present his demands to the vanquished in *installments*. He can then be sure that a nation which has become characterless—and such is every one which voluntarily submits—will no longer find any sufficient reason in each of these detailed oppressions to take up arms once more. The more extortions thus cheerfully accepted, the more unjustified does it seem to people finally to set about defending themselves against some new, apparently isolated, although really constantly recurring, oppressions (*Mein Kampf*, P. 968).

This interesting process of slow enslavement by progressive poisoning of the will is exactly that to which England and France have been systematically subjected. Armed reoccupation and fortification of the Rhineland—no reaction: the first "drop

"of poison" was in the French nation's blood, to be "passed along to posterity, and cripple and lay low the strength of generations to come." (*Mein Kampf*, P. 969) A second drop was the annexation of Austria—no reaction of course: the poison was working well. A more generous dose of it could now be given with still less danger. After surrendering, as a first instalment, those parts of her territory where more than fifty per cent of the population was German, then cutting the ratio down to forty per cent as a second instalment, Czechoslovakia was surrendering her whole territory as a third and last one.

While these momentous events were taking place, the United States was issuing the most solemn appeals to peace; the Premiers of England and France, suddenly seized with a belated passion for travel by air, were flying from place to place to hear the new master of Europe restate that such being his will, such also would be his ways.

#### HITLER'S PLANS ARE BALKED

This time, however, the commentary of *Mein Kampf* so perfectly fitted Hitler's acts, that nobody but a blind man could fail to see what was at stake. Yet, there still was no English or French reaction. Whether England or France could then have reacted but would not, or would then have liked to react but could not, I am not prepared to say. The main point is that they did not react, whence Hitler naturally concluded, on the strength of Clausewitz' principle, that they had now imbibed sufficient poison cheerfully to suffer the indefinite recurrence of the same old extortion.

The next on the list was to be Poland. On January 26, 1934, Germany had concluded with Poland, for a period of ten years, a treaty according to which neither of the two high contracting parties would "proceed to the application of force for the purpose of reaching a decision in their disputes." In his Reichstag speech on January 30, 1939, Hitler was still celebrating with enthusiasm the fifth anniversary of the conclusion of his non-aggression pact with Poland; but in another Reichstag speech, April 28, 1939, the Czechoslovakian business being wholly liquidated, Hitler turned to Poland with his classical demand for a first instalment: the unconditional return of Danzig into the framework of the German Reich, a route through the Corridor and an extra-territorial railway line between East Prussia and the Reich.

What would Poland do? If Poland had said yes, England and France would not now be at war; and not only would there be no longer any Poland, as is now the case, but there would never more have been any Poland, which is not going to be the case. This is, however, to use the expression of an American paper, how "the Poles became the hapless victims of treacherous British diplomacy and German bombs." The worthy author of these lines probably knows how long Poland supposed she could hold her ground against the German army; he no doubt also knows the exact mode and extent of "the pledged assurance" given to Poland "that

England and France would lend the aid of their armed forces"; consequently he can safely conclude that Poland has been betrayed.

Not being myself possessed of that information, I must take his word for it. But there is something else I do know, because I have learned it from Hitler who himself has learned it from Clausewitz, and it is that as compared with "the blemish of cowardly submission, even the extinction of freedom after a bloody and honorable struggle insures the rebirth of a nation and is the seed of life out of which a new tree some day will strike fast roots." (*Mein Kampf*, P. 969) The simple truth, perhaps, is that living as we ourselves do on the German frontier, some Poles, too, have read *Mein Kampf*.

#### FRANCE MUST WILL TO FIGHT

For England and France, the situation had then become tragic, but, at long last, it was clear. Two generous appeals of President Roosevelt to Hitler, on April 14 and on August 24 of last year, had yielded no fruit. If I remember correctly, the words of the President of the United States had not even received a German answer. Frightened by the recent fate of Czechoslovakia, Poland had hastily completed, with England and France, a new pact according to which she would receive support "in the event of any action which clearly threatened Polish independence, and which the Polish government accordingly considered it vital to resist." (*British War Blue Book*. Toronto, 1939, P. 37) Such an action had been taken by the German Government; Poland was resisting it; England and France had no other choice than to do what Hitler felt sure they were no longer able to do: take up arms, too late perhaps to protect Poland against the present German invasion, but not too late to make Germany realize that there would still be a free Poland in the future. And there will be one, so help us God!

Such have been the motives which impelled France to go to war. Obviously, "motives" is a weak word; "causes" would be a better one. It is not "motives" which cause a country to suffer an earthquake; and there actually is an earthquake in the Europe of today, and France just happens to be dangerously near its very center. This, at least, is the way we Frenchmen look at it. Nazi Germany has done the very things and followed the very course of action which, as Hitler himself said several years ago, would *necessarily* entail a "reckoning" with France. We have been put by his powerful will in the very situation in which he always said that we could do nothing but fight.

Such being the sort of war we are in, its aim can be but simple. It is all very well to tell us: why do you not stop this nonsense and come to terms before millions are killed? You simply do not know the German will. Because, on the strength of your reason, you foresee an Allied victory as highly probable, you conclude that with a little good will and at the cost of a few concessions, the Allies could bring Hitler back to common sense. It is not so. What France is now up against is a fixed will to

conquer the world. "One word I have never learned," Hitler says, "that is, surrender." (Speech to Reichstag, September 1, 1939) Where our reason tells us that Hitler has lost the game, Hitler's will tells him that he can still win it. With a "ridiculously small state," Frederick the Great finally came out successful in three wars against a powerful coalition. Surely, Hitler's will is not less strong than that of Frederick the Great; why, then, could he not contrive a thousand ways of achieving what looks to us impossible? So long as you keep willing the same end, the means do not matter a bit.

Hitler once said that the outcome of any treaty between Germany and Russia "would be the end of Germany." (*Mein Kampf*, P. 959) You would not have thought it possible that Hitler could afterward conclude any treaty with Russia. Yet he did. And if you now think that he will abide by his treaty, then you still do not know the possibilities of the German will. Stalin does, let us be sure of it. The man who considers that the *existence* of a non-German military power is an *attack* (*Mein Kampf*, P. 963), will never consider his war as lost as long as there is a strong, undefeated German army to back his will: "If our will is so strong that no hardship and suffering can subdue it, then our will and our German might shall prevail." (Speech to Reichstag, September 1, 1939) To negotiate with such a will would be to negotiate without conceivable guarantee. Any truce, any treaty would be but our surrendering of one more instalment on our way to the whole surrendering of France. This is why France has but one war aim: that is, victory.

#### PEACE WITH GERMANY

But after victory, and as its proper aim, there comes peace. Between victory and peace there is this essential difference, that whereas we can win the war but *against* Germany, we can make peace but *with* Germany. In other words, while France's victory cannot possibly be at the same time Germany's victory, France's own peace has necessarily to be one with Germany's own peace. I say "necessarily," because unless Germany and France can look at it and say: *our* peace, there will be between them no concord of will, that is, there will be no peace at all. Any peace between Germany and the rest of Europe must therefore rest upon a mutual agreement of wills to maintain a certain European order. In that order, Germany is fully entitled to hold her own place according to her own historical traditions and to her own natural rights. She simply has to learn that the most sacred right in the world is *not* "the right to that earth which a man desires to till himself." (*Mein Kampf*, P. 964) This cannot be a sacred right because, if another man is already tilling that same earth, it is not a right at all. But we quite agree that the right of the Germans to till the German earth is a sacred right. I am satisfied that no one among the Allies will ever dispute it.

The first real move toward peace must, therefore, be to undo, as far as will be possible, the evils which are its proximate cause. The fundamental condition

of a just and honorable peace is to assure the right to life and independence of all nations, large or small, weak or strong. Austria has ceased to be an independent nation without being consulted; Austria must be consulted and her free decision, whatever it happens to be, should be scrupulously respected. Czechoslovakia and Poland have been brutally wiped off the map; these countries should be restored within their natural limits to their own rights.

I do not think this will be an easy task. The eternal problem of the minorities will still be there, and that of the German minorities will be a particularly hard one. But there is, perhaps, no compelling reason why Germany should consider herself as the rightful owner of every house where there are fifty per cent German guests. These problems fall under the jurisdiction of diplomats, and whatever be the outcome of their efforts, it is bound to be a human, hence an imperfect one.

#### GERMANY AT PEACE

It is, nevertheless, our common opinion that some sort of workable scheme can be found wherein Germany could live at peace with her neighbors. We do not want a punished Germany, nor a crippled Germany, nor a humiliated Germany; we still less want a poverty-stricken Germany which would fall an easy prey to Marxism. What we want is a prosperous Germany, and we want it because we need it. We need German musicians, German scientists, German scholars, and German beer. I am not so sure that I need German metaphysics, but what I want above all are my German friends. Unless there be order in and for Germany as well as in and for any other nation, there will not be peace with Germany, and the Allies' victory will be but the prelude to another war.

When he writes this, a Frenchman knows perfectly well that the immediate German reaction will be: "Well, well, this is fine. Let us see what we can get out of it." Such is the reason why a third and decisive move toward peace should be the constitution or the reconstitution of juridical institutions which would serve to ensure the execution of treaties and keep them up to date. I am alluding here to the League of Nations and I am not ashamed of it. 'Tis true, the League has failed to suppress war, but so far, law courts have failed to suppress crime, which is surely no reason why there should be neither tribunals nor law. It would have been much less conspicuously a failure if, instead of a League, it had been a Society of Nations, and if those who deride it as a ridiculous failure had done a little more toward making it what it ought to be: a Society of States, fully equipped with adequate juridical institutions and openly resolved to stop any violence that may arise against law.

#### FRANCE TAKES UP HER TASK

Such, I honestly believe, is the average French view of the present war. Do not object to me that the average Frenchman cannot freely quote *Mein*

*Kampf*. He can. On the jacket of the first French translation were printed these words of Marshal Lyautey: *The Book which every Frenchman should read*. Numberless copies of it have been sold in France; the speeches of Hitler have been summed up on the radio, while they were being delivered, for the benefit of those who do not understand German; the voice of Hitler himself has thundered, flattered, threatened in countless French homes, and French villages have been avidly listening to it for hours, without understanding a word of it, as to the voice of the man who would soon become their master unless they were ready for what Hitler himself once called an "investment of blood."

Because, to them, Hitler has never been a joke but a grim reality, England and France are now matching his investment of blood with an investment of their own. For historical and geographical reasons these two nations—I should rather say the nation, "Anglo-France"—have to bear the burden of this war. This is natural, and we know it is. Themselves part and parcel of Europe, England and France consider it as just that *they* should assume European responsibilities. Other nations have responsibilities of their own, which they do not expect us to assume in their place no more than we can expect them to assume ours.

We trust that we can stop the Nazi drive to world mastership before it reaches the shores of other continents; but another drive to the same goal may start at any time, in other parts of the world, and the Allies themselves would be the first to rejoice were some great nation, still uncrippled by war, then free and willing to stop it. The French understand quite well that, barring unpredictable and wholly undesirable complications, America's way to peace is strict neutrality; but they would like the Americans to understand why they themselves think that England's and France's only way to peace is war.

We do not love war; we hate it. We are not enthusiastic about this war, but we are pretty grim about it, and because the French entered it without the least enthusiasm, they are going to see it through. Any effort to understand them and any constructive criticism would be welcomed as a more helpful attitude than either approval for things they do not do or blame for feelings they do not have.

In inviting me to analyze for its readers the French side of the issue, AMERICA's generosity has gone far beyond the limits of elementary justice. Hence could I better express my deep gratitude for such a gesture than by giving it its proper name? It is Charity.

# HITLERISM IS NOT GERMANISM

FRIEDRICH BAERWALD

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## NAZISM AND GERMANISM

IN the first days of the war, British airplanes dropped leaflets on numerous German cities in which Germans were told that this war was only against their present Government and not against the people itself. On various occasions shortly after the outbreak of the war Allied leaders were anxious to stress that they were fighting merely against Hitlerism. I do not intend to dwell on the propagandistic value, if any, of Mr. Chamberlain's discovery in 1939 that National Socialism is "wicked" and a threat to Western Civilization. As late as the fall of 1938, he proclaimed publicly that by signing together with Hitler a piece of paper foreswearing war between Germany and Britain he had "saved civilization as we know it." The Nazi regime of 1938 was not different from that of 1939. All its frightful features had been fully developed, and what actually followed could be anticipated with moral certainty.

It seems, furthermore, that, as the war continues, a subtle change of interpretation of Allied war aims

is taking place. Now we hear arguments that the Nazi system somehow represents typical characteristics of the German mind as such. We are told that the German nation, if not checked, will always revert to a political system such as existed under the Kaiser and is enforced under Hitler. Quite apart from the fact that the "Second Reich" had hardly anything in common with the "Third Reich," the whole attempt to identify the German nation with its present regime is objectively fallacious and most unfair.

It is true, of course, that National Socialism interprets itself as the ultimate and unchangeable realization of the German soul. However, if this Nazi doctrine is now to be accepted abroad at its face value, the suspicion is justified that a psychological buildup is being prepared in which a Second Versailles could follow the Third Reich. This would mean not only the end of the German people. It would mean the self-destruction for all times of Western Civilization. If something is to be salvaged at all from the wreckage of the present war and the ravages of the "peace" preceding it, the false

argument that Nazism is Germanism must be uprooted. For European civilization cannot continue without a genuine and thoroughly free contribution from Germany.

#### NAZISM WITHIN GERMANISM

The question that has puzzled many people is: Why could Nazism develop in Germany and why do people seem to stand for it? The answer is necessarily complex and perhaps seemingly diffuse. But so is the reality that we are facing. In the space at my disposal I can only outline the problem. In general we can say that National Socialism became possible because certain deep-rooted trends within the intellectual and political structure in Germany had left that country in a phase of its development in which it could not withstand in a *rational* way the psychological and economic shock of Versailles. If those responsible for that settlement had desired in earnest to spread democracy, they would have taken these rather obvious facts into account. However, they were only thinking in terms of power and retaliation.

Compared to the peoples of Great Britain and France, the German nation is younger in a political and biological sense. The Western nations, having gone through their revolutions and counter-revolutions, have found a definite form of their own genuine political culture. They may experience grave political difficulties and crises. However, these crises are within the system. They are not crises of the system. The German people, on the other side, due to an altogether different and, at that, disorganizing historical experience coinciding with the formative stages of the British and French empires, have not yet succeeded in integrating their political behavior, attitudes and institutions into their general cultural pattern.

#### NAZISM IS NOT GERMANISM

There is a cleavage between the cultural and political sphere in Germany. Traditionally, that is expressed by pointing out the two types of mutually exclusive German "spirit": the spirit of Potsdam and the spirit of Weimar. The first stands for the state, for efficiency, power and disciplinarian co-ordination. The latter is understood as representing the pursuit of poetic, artistic and intellectual interests and achievements to the complete neglect of political problems. Its symbol is Goethe, the great German poet who failed to get very excited about Napoleon's domination over Germany. Frederick II symbolizes Potsdam. He was a military and political genius, but his contempt for genuine German culture, with the exception of music, is a matter of record. In his old age he published a pamphlet tearing to pieces one of Goethe's most German plays.

To make the picture complete, I would like merely to mention that neither Potsdam nor Weimar represent even in part the Catholic tradition in Germany which was submerged almost completely in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This

temporary disappearance of Catholic thinking as a social factor with its possible contribution to an integration of the spiritual and political explains, to a certain extent, the past difficulties to develop in Germany a generally valid framework of binding concepts of political values underlying all possible dissensions on practical ends and methods. I am far from saying that this unity cannot be achieved. I firmly believe that it is on its way.

It must be stressed, however, that there is within the German mind still a great measure of youthful indeterminateness. There is not yet that rigidity that comes with maturity. That explains why there was at the beginning of this century a youth-movement in Germany of a type that simply could not have happened anywhere else. It makes clear why German thinkers have a preference for terms like "polarity" and "tension."

These short remarks must suffice to indicate that nothing could be more erroneous than to assume that the present regime in Germany, with its fake religion, philosophy and biology, can from any angle whatsoever be regarded as the definite expression of the German mind. However, I hope that I have shown why this mind was dangerously fluctuating and susceptible to a novel ideology when, at a very critical point of its own development, the contact with outside forces turned into failure. The Nazi spirit has nothing to do either with Potsdam or Weimar. It is a psychological transfer in terms of an internal power and propaganda monopoly of the spirit of Versailles.

#### THE FAILURE OF DEMOCRACY

To Germans, regardless of background and social preferences, the Treaty of Versailles represented, and will continue to do so, the embodied spirit of intolerance, injustice, repression and rule of force. The war-guilt clause, one-sided disarmament, the prolonged discrimination against Germany after the war, reparations and military occupation, all exercised psychological and physical pressures that the weakened body and spirit of the German people could not withstand. National Socialism is a political disease caused by the contagious hate germs of the Versailles system, injected into the very blood stream of the German community at a time when its constitution was least able to develop effective antitoxins. This does not at all exculpate any of Hitler's policies. It does not redeem his system of psychological terrorism and deceit or his own guilt and responsibility before history and the German people. However, only this historical perspective reveals why democracy failed in Germany and why it was succeeded by the present nightmare.

The Western democracies did about everything possible to undermine the prestige of a democratic German Government. For years after the Armistice, the representatives of that Government were not treated on equal terms. They were summoned to conferences which were not conferences at all, but simply occasions to deliver ultimatums that had to be accepted under the threat of force. I do

not mean to say that the Allied politicians actually intended to make the growth of democracy in Germany as difficult as possible. But that was exactly the effect of their actions. It is true that progress has been made toward an undoing of the Versailles Treaty under Stresemann and Bruening. While such progress was a real achievement, considering the maldistribution of actual power in Europe at that time, it was slow, unspectacular, and all concessions were granted grudgingly and under circumstances that made it difficult for the Government to let them appear to the German people as the success they really were. Democracy in Germany, still being without its own symbols of authority and deprived of a background of tradition and glamor, could only appeal soberly to common sense, intelligence and rational behavior.

Since such appeals failed to meet with ready and willing cooperation abroad, it is unfair to blame the German people for its waning confidence in the undramatic and seemingly futile processes of democratic deliberations. When the great depression of 1929 set in, the escape into emotionalism and irrationalism was already close at hand. It was fully exploited by Hitler. He topped all known records of distortion and mud-throwing, combining them with a novel technique of mass propaganda and organization, which could not be matched by the older political groups for the simple reason that they respected certain rules of political decency unknown to National Socialism.

#### HITLER GRASPS POWER

In spite of all this it would be misstating the case if we would say that Germans knew fully what they were doing when they first succumbed to National Socialism. I have no hesitation in stating that those who, in increasing numbers, voted for Hitler did not realize completely what he was out to do. If they had known it, they would never have voted for him in the first place. They took his tirades and his propaganda as a new type of political three-ring circus. However, they voted him into political prominence very much in the manner of a typical American protest vote that does not really imply a full endorsement of the platform of the opposition.

It is also necessary to note that there were three groups whose interaction finally made Hitler's rise possible. The increasing number of plain voters was probably the least important factor. More significant was a group of "appeasers" who thought that this rising tide of radicalism could be best dealt with by granting certain concessions and letting it share the power of government. The most important circle consisted of people whose hatred against the German New Deal was so great that they were willing to go all the way to get rid of it. They shared with the aforementioned faction the naive idea that Hitler could be used as a front man while they were running the show backstage for their own purposes.

But once these groups had given Hitler the possibility to assume power, they were trapped. It was

too late then, and there was no possibility left to register protests against the increasingly distasteful actions of that political Frankenstein. It is, therefore, not quite fair to conclude from the absence of open opposition that the German people tolerates voluntarily this regime. It should be realized, furthermore, that one of the propagandistic tricks of this regime consists of not letting the people at home know what is really going on. Another one is to create, wilfully, crisis situations in which people are temporarily ready to accept things they would never be prepared to swallow otherwise. The novel Nazi technique of propaganda does not just consist of false statements. It creates fake situations, frameups, false fronts, fictitious enemies, and epidemics of fear and hate.

#### THE MIND OF THE PEOPLE

To all this applies, of course, Lincoln's famous words of the impossibility of fooling all of the people all of the time. However, in the meantime, to make people living under such type of government responsible for its continuation, and thereby, to infer that their toleration of this regime of terror reflects on their real mentality which would be likely to survive this special government—that is adding to the tragedy that has already befallen them. This deeply pessimistic and defeatist trend of thinking is just as dangerous to the preservation of civilization as is the converse type, that keeps on pretending that the frightening aspects of Nazism are nothing more than partial errors and aberrations.

For the last twenty years the German people have been fighting against the facts and the spirit of Versailles. In this long fight, this spirit itself unfortunately transformed itself into the Nazi revolution. To "cure" Germany from that affliction by a new type of Versailles dictate, no matter what its ideological disguise may be this time, would make matters not only worse but completely hopeless for the world we live in.

#### GERMANY SEEKS PEACE

We need real peace. The Germans need it just as much if not more so than any other nation. But peace can never be guaranteed by systems of distrust, discrimination and dissolution of natural national communities. In 1919 the German people were willing to embark on the adventure of democracy. However, they were not given a fair chance really to try this best but most difficult form of government. Under favorable circumstances they could have succeeded.

The misery of the present war and of the preceding period of armed and deceitful peace will have been in vain if history is allowed to repeat itself. The coming collapse of Hitlerism must not be allowed to deteriorate into a defeat of Germany. If this war is to end in lasting peace, a situation must be created in which Nazism is the loser and the German people is ranking equally and freely among the victors.

# AS AN ENGLISHMAN SEES IT

## ARNOLD LUNN

ON December 9, I had the honor of lecturing at the American College in Rome. It was delightful to experience once again the warm welcome which we English Catholics have learned to associate with a visit to the States and it is distressing to feel that the cordial cooperation between American and British Catholics may be one of the many good things which are imperiled by the War. And yet, nobody who has read the spirited reply of the *Tablet* to Father Gillis' strictures can feel wholly happy about the present situation.

No informed Englishman believes that America either will or should intervene in this conflict. My own pride as an Englishman would suffer if we had once again to call in the New World to redress the balance of the Old. The sore feelings in English Catholic circles is due, not to your determination to remain neutral, which we respect, but to the fact that some of your writers seem to fear that your political isolation can only be maintained if you put the worst possible construction on England's motives and England's record.

Britain, we are told, is only waging war for selfish motives. I quarrel with the word "only." It is wrong for the individual to neglect the "selfish" motive of saving his soul, and it is wrong for a Government to wage war unless the interests of the country are involved. A shrewd Swiss recently said to me: "I am interested not in Britain's motives but in Britain's policy. If her selfish interests forbid her to permit Hitler to annex Switzerland, I am glad that her selfishness takes this form. And I do not criticize your Government for placing British interests first. That is what they are elected to do."

On the other hand, I do not believe that it would be possible to involve Britain in a European war unless "selfish" and idealistic motives were mixed. I spent the week before the declaration of war in 1914 in the National Liberal Club. Three-quarters of the members were isolationists before Belgium was invaded; and nine-tenths were interventionists after Belgian neutrality had been violated.

The determination of Britain to keep out of war was so intense after the Great War that nothing but the crude brutalities of the Nazi regime could have disturbed our mood of somewhat unheroic pacifism. Incidentally, it is a little trying that critics who attacked us for not standing up to dictators in 1938 criticize us for fighting them in 1939.

My father was a Pro-Boer and my Irish mother a Sinn Feiner, and I am therefore not unfamiliar with the case against the British Empire. Self interest has, of course, been an important factor in the development of our Empire, but it has not been the *only* factor. We have not only preached but

practised the ideal of tolerance and the free development of those over whom we have ruled.

Other critics affect to see no difference between British and German landgrabbing save the centuries in which they took place. Admittedly, the British and Americans have proved successful land-grabbers with the excellent result that the American Continent enjoys today a European rather than a Red Indian civilization. Is there no distinction between the ousting of Indian tribes and the destruction of Catholic Poland, that great bastion of Catholic culture in Northern Europe? Is there any American Catholic who does not hope and pray for the rebirth of Catholic Poland? If Poland rises from the dead, that resurrection will owe much to the prayers of Catholics in America, Eire, Spain and Italy but also something to the blood and sacrifice of France and Protestant England.

Other critics suggest that this war might have been avoided had England been ready to admit that she enjoyed more than her fair share of the earth's surface. We have more than once declared our readiness to consider this precise question. But those who criticize us for an unwillingness in the past to surrender complete control over the areas which we rule should remember that many Europeans attribute this war to the rigid barriers which post-war America raised against immigration. The British Empire is not the only Empire which is the object of envy. Incidentally, I remember reading an amusing article in, I think, the *American Mercury* in which the author tried to prove that the United States has averaged far more wars since their Independence was declared than the most belligerent of European powers.

But my *eirenicon* must not consist of *tu quoques*. I feel about this war as I felt about the war in Spain. The *Osservatore Romano* roundly condemned those Catholic neutralists whose attitude was not in accordance with the mind of the Church as expressed by the Pope and by the majority of the Hierarchy. But the Vatican never suggested that Catholics were under any obligation to agitate for armed intervention. What was condemned was spiritual neutrality, the attitude that there was nothing to choose between those in whose territory every church was open and those in whose territory every church was burnt, destroyed or closed. I felt then, as I feel now, that post-mortems on the Spanish aristocracy or the mixed motives of the Nationalists were wholly irrelevant. I knew that if the Reds won, every effort would be made to uproot Catholicism from the soil of Spain. And it seemed to me that nothing else mattered but to beat the Reds.

My attitude to this war is influenced not only by my love of England but also by my love of Catholic Austria, Bavaria and the Rhineland. If Hitler wins, God help the Church in the territories under his control! I have discussed the situation with Catholics in six neutral countries. I have not found one who is not praying for our victory. The sympathies of the Vatican emerge with clarity from the recent Encyclical.

I leave others to argue as to whether this is or is not a crusade. These terminological controversies seem to me trivial compared to the tremendous issue of the day. It is the paradox of the situation that the preservation of Catholic culture in Germany and Poland depends very largely on the determination of France and Protestant England to see this thing through. And all we ask from our Catholic friends in America is their sympathy and their prayers.

If the Nazis had conquered South America and were waging war on the United States, I should not think the moment opportune for a discussion of the seamier side of the American record. I might be strongly in favor of political neutrality but I should not be an isolationist in my prayers. On the contrary, I should follow with anxious sympathy a struggle in which the Americans would be defending not only Christian civilization but a conception of freedom and human dignity which has its roots in Athens. In such a conflict no Catholic can advocate spiritual isolation.

I should not be writing as I do unless I felt convinced that my English friends have misjudged the attitude of the American Catholics, the overwhelming majority of whom, I am convinced, are praying for the defeat of Hitler and of Stalin.

## THEY BROUGHT HIM UNTO THE TEMPLE

WILLIAM J. McGARRY, S.J.



OFFICIALLY, on February 2, the Catholic Church celebrates the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In the Fourth Joyful Mystery of the Rosary, it is called the Presentation, for it commemorates the offering of the First-born of Mary to God. In the Eastern Churches the same Feast is named the "Meeting of the Lord," that is, the meeting of Jesus and His parents with Simeon and Anna. Finally, in our popular usage, the day is called Candlemas.

These names are four facets of an exquisite liturgical jewel. For on the occasion which Saint Luke portrays in second chapter of his Gospel, five holy souls did *meet*. Mary and Joseph brought the Child Jesus to the Temple; and there, because of Herod's

fear, innocence had proclaimed its love with its blood; so now age, by the lips of Simeon and Anna, bespoke out of its God-given wisdom and fear, a welcome and a word that love's road to Calvary would be hard.

At the *meeting*, the *Hypapante* of the Greek Church, the Mother, though stainless, was *purified*, and the Child, though God, as Man was *dedicated* to God. He, the Light of the World, was carried into God's Temple, and the medieval Candlemas, commemorating that entrance of Christ into the earthly sanctuary, had its procession of the Faithful who carried lighted candles into the church in the wake of the celebrant who held a *bambino* in his arms. The Faithful now purchase and bring home their candles for the year on this Feast, so that, should the gloom of death enshroud the home and cast its shadow, the Light of the World may shine to guide the footsteps of the pilgrim homeward bound to his fatherland and God.

But why must the Immaculate one have been purified? And why must the Child Whose soul on earth was a truer and worthier sanctuary of God than any earth-built Temple of Israel be brought for presentation? Simply this. The Child and Mary and Joseph submitted to a law which did not bind them. Thus, they did not anticipate the announcement, save to a few chosen souls of God, of the King and the Kingdom one day to be proclaimed from the house-tops. Thus, too, they did their willing deed of humility, for they stood with God's and Israel's poor, and offered, not a sheep, but the less expensive pair of turtle doves in sacrifice. Thus, too, they came, and the Child wished it, that He might lie in the arms and lighten the heart of old Simeon and enkindle love in the dim eyes of old Anna. And lastly, the Child was presented to God, the purest oblation of earth, in the holiest place of a holy land, and therein He renewed His human offering of Himself to God, and said again what He had said when He came into the world: "A body thou has fitted to me. . . . Behold I come that I should do thy will, O God." (Heb. x, 5-7)

Of old, in speaking to the fathers of the chosen race, God had commanded that every first-born of the people be given over to the service of the nation's sanctuary. Later, the tribe of Levi was appointed to the holy task, but a special dedication of the first male child that opened the mother's womb was retained. In bearing this child the Israelitic mother contracted, not guilt or stain in conscience or person, but what was called a Levitical impurity. This was reducible to several obligations to which the holy Law bound her, principal of which was the presenting of the child at the Temple and the offering of a sacrifice. For the capable, this was a sheep; for the poor, a pair of turtle doves.

Now Mary bore the Son of God, the very enactor of the law of the first-born; and thus, He was not included in it; for law binds the will of the subject and not the sovereign will which created it. Again, this law concerned the child who was naturally sprung from loins and womb; but Mary's Son was virginally born. Nevertheless, on the for-

tieth day, the Maiden Mother stood with the several others whose men children were born on Christmas Day, and stood with the poor among them. With them and their proud young husbands she and Joseph milled about the Temple yard and bargained with the sellers of sacrificial animals. With them the Virgin Mother moved in procession toward the place of sacrifice, and gave over her Baby to the arms of the priest who would present the Child ceremonially to God.

There are no elements of sorrow in this mystery as we have described it thus far. If we can penetrate into the Virgin's heart and read her thoughts, we may say that at the moment when the priest laid the dedicated Child back in her arms she was thrilled with ecstatic joy. Abounding streams of delight poured over her soul, for her Child, God in one nature and thus ungiveable to God, was given to God in all that was His from her. His sacred Humanity, bone of her bone and flesh of her flesh, now belonged to God.

In that oblation of her will there were peace and delight, for publicly and ceremonially in a sanctuary of man's building, that was now done which a thousand times she had done within the sanctuary of her own thoughts. We can only suggest, but do not pretend to measure the Virgin's joy by the happiness of a Catholic mother whose child, awaited in eager anxiety, come with gladdening pain, is returned to her bed from the font of Baptism.

Joy again floods the Virgin's soul when an aged man comes to her kindly, asks to take the Child in his arms, and speaks, oh how strangely, not to her, but prays to God. The Virgin hears his confession that his pilgrimage on earth is done; peace walks, he says, with his slow-pacing steps to God, for his eyes, long peering for this day, have seen the salvation of God come to earth. Wondering at the aged lingering syllables, Mary and Joseph hear this Child called the Light of the Gentiles, the Glory of Israel. They bow their head as this gray and bent spokesman of all the devout sons of their race blesses them. But when they raise their heads, aged Simeon has passed from blessing to prophecy.

Mary understands that many in Israel will fall, and many rise; so it had ever been in the history of her people. But now she hears that her Son is set up as the sign of this awesome cleavage. It is He Who is God's sign to men, and men will dare to oppose, contradict, insult Him. Men, even, will raise Him up on crossed wood-beams so that the sign of contradiction may be seen and known coterminously with the long centuries of a future, more darksome, yet more lightsome too, than the Virgin knew.

"And thine own soul a sword shall pierce," the prophetic words run on. Simeon has turned his eyes to Mary, and sorrow knocks upon her door. Her soul a sheath for the sword of God's pain! Her heart a scabbard of flesh to close upon and clothe some rapier fashioned by Divine contriving! Quickly she renews her faith; swiftly she offers to God her acceptance of His will; instantly she

declares her readiness for all, for anything; for if her Son is to win redemption by a Cross, then she will be strong enough, strong with all the courage of a million mothers' hearts, to stand with Him and watch His dying.

We may notice how, quite simply, Simeon blessed the Virgin before he spoke his prophecy of pain. His words were indeed hard words as the world might measure them. But he gave no excuses why God asked a mother to suffer agonies. He added no promised comfort to dilute or diminish the chalice of sorrow which he filled. Like to every prophet who had spoken God's messages to privileged Israel, he was plain, plain and unexcusing even to the weak or recalcitrant or unprepared for doom. And to such resistant mortals the prophecies were but predictions of evils and pains reluctantly to be endured.

But to those who tried to penetrate God's plan with men, to the alert of soul and quick of heart who knew their creatures' duty to trust the loving God of fallen man, such prophecies were not threatenings. They were invitations to have part in Divine activities; they were compliments from Wisdom omnipotent to aid in a work Divinely to be done; they were appeals of Grace knocking upon the doors of human hearts, arousing them to come forth and cooperate in the campaign of joy and pain, the campaign of difficult victory after sweet endurance. Most alert, most eager, most anxious to engage upon this task of God was the heart of Mary. For as she was closest to the Redeemer in her being and in her holiness, so too she worked with her Son in effecting man's redemption.

On the day of the Child's Presentation and of the Virgin's Purification the prophecy of the cost of Mary's title of Co-worker in man's salvation was clearly spoken. For the first time a note of sorrow begins to reach her ear and gains tone more resoundingly. She had known the ineffable joy of the quiet hours of the Annunciation. She had felt the immeasurable delight of hearing her cousin Elizabeth hail her Son and herself, and in answer her *Magnificat* was an antiphonal canticle of Divine delight. Shepherds and Magi had come to adore her Son, and in her heart was the strong desire that these chosen ones represent all the poor and simple as well as all the elegant and opulent and powerful of earth. When Simeon and Anna spoke, in their voice she wished to hear the volume of profession which she prayed her Jewish kinsmen would make.

But alas, in the same hour, the heavier, deeper notes of sorrow and pain begin to sound in the Divine overture of joy. Her dedication of this Child to God means that He is dedicated to future pain and ignominy. Her own Purification is but the preparing of her soul for dread hours some day to toll. "Thine own soul a sword shall pierce."

The Virgin and Joseph return to their home. They are quiet upon the journey, for at the Temple they have heard words on which their hearts will ponder. The Virgin begins to feel the pain of the privileges which are hers, but, true daughter of God as well as Mother of Christ, she takes pain within her heart courageously.

## IF YOU DON'T WATCH OUT!

IT is almost an adage, although the saying dates back only to the eighteenth-century novelist, Laurence Sterne, that "they order this matter better in France." France knows far better than we how to deal with a political party which hides its destructive purposes under protestations of fervent patriotism. According to the dispatches, sixty-one Deputies and one Senator have been expelled from the legislative body, on the ground that they had not severed their connection with the Communist party, as required by law.

We follow another line in the United States. Communists, and what is more dangerous, their fellow travelers, are freely permitted to hold office in our cities, and in the State and Federal Governments. In practically all the States, the Communists are registered as a political party, with the same legal standing as the Democratic and Republican organizations. There is nothing in the Federal Constitution, or in the Constitutions of the several States, which forbids the use of political means for the furtherance of political or other objects, provided that the party confines itself to legitimate methods. The object may be what it will, but the methods must be in keeping with the letter and spirit of the laws, Federal and State, enacted to suppress disorder as well as to protect all rights.

It is fairly clear from the record, however, that the average Communist does not boggle at taking an oath to support the Constitution. To him it is not a solemn pledge which binds in conscience, but something that he can disregard in order to work more effectively against the Government which he has sworn to defend. Here we have an unhealthy condition which obviously calls for correction. Unfortunately, it is easier to diagnose the case than to find a remedy.

But of one fact we are sure. The remedy is not to be found in the sensational raids recently staged by J. Edgar Hoover in New York, when with a rolling of drums and a fanfare of trumpets the chief of FBI announced in a lengthy statement to the press that he had captured seventeen desperadoes plotting to overthrow the Government of the United States. These prisoners may or may not be guilty, but in any case they seem pitifully small fry, and the circumstances of their capture, as staged by Mr. Hoover, are unmistakably *opera bouffe*. Perhaps Mr. Hoover has his vigilant eye on the heavier villains of the piece, but it seems to us that the fireworks he set off in New York have lighted the way for their escape.

The Government, it would appear, did not call on the services of the FBI in the case of Harry Bridges. We also regret that, although the Government has been investigating fraudulent passport cases for at least ten years, it has thus far captured not seventeen law-breakers, but only two. We abhor witch-hunts, but we suspect the tireless pursuit that headlines the capture of a few poor dupes, and is not interested in Communism. Decidedly, they order this matter better in France.

## EDITO

### WHAT PROGRESS?

WE are fortunate, writes Mrs. Roosevelt, that the Children's Bureau "can give leadership" which "insures progress during the next ten years." Progress in what direction? If this lauded Children's Bureau approves Mrs. Roosevelt's statement on "planned births," for which she has been thanked by leaders in the birth-control movement, we shall make great progress toward empty cradles, and debased moral standards. Are we in such sad case that parents must learn from Washington how to care for their children? If so, the end of the family, and of this Government, is not far off.

### RACKETEERS IN T

ONLY a few weeks ago, we complained that we had been waiting for years to hear the President of the A. F. of L. denounce racketeering in A. F. of L. unions. We wait no longer. In an address in East St. Louis on January 20, President Green called on the unions to root out "the few miserable" racketeers, since the A. F. of L. was without authority "to police its affiliated autonomous unions."

This is not exclusively a denunciation. It is an expression of disapproval, however, and for it we are duly grateful. But the concluding phrase has a familiar ring. It is a plea, of a sort, but mainly an admission of weakness. What benefit will the worker or organized labor get from a national association unable to control local unions with leaders engaged chiefly in the business of extorting money from honest wage-earners?

If, under its constitution, the A. F. of L. cannot make any distinction between union heads who are scoundrels, and union leaders who are what their name implies, it is high time to change that constitution. A constitution which does not permit the A. F. of L. "to police its affiliated autonomous unions," at least to the extent of repudiating the affiliation, will not help organized labor. The general who is blind to spies and traitors in the camp is unfit to be a leader.

If President Green spoke with conviction last week, we may hope that he will at once move to amend the constitution of the A. F. of L. The unions should be autonomous, of course, but

## INTERNATIONAL SAPS

IN carrying on their war, our British cousins continue to take American ships into British ports for a more complete search than is feasible at sea. They are also confiscating mail sent from this country, on the ground that the enclosures in the letters aid the enemy. Up to the present, they have paid as much attention to the remonstrances of Secretary Hull, as Mexico has paid to our protests against confiscation of American property; which is, precisely, none. Why should they? We Americans justly merit the title universally given us. We are the international saps.

## S IN THE A. F. OF L.

this local self-government has limits, particularly when the unions are part of a national organization. A union controlled by racketeers is obviously not a labor union, but a source of easy income for scoundrels. Instead of adding strength to labor's position, it weakens labor by confirming the opinion (which is becoming alarmingly common) that the labor union is generally, if not necessarily, dishonest and disorderly. The wrong impression is firmly set in many citizens when they observe that the task of uncovering and correcting flagrant abuses is undertaken by the district attorney, not infrequently over the protest of the union.

Racketeering is certainly not the hall-mark of the A. F. of L. union, but it disgraces too many. The A. F. of L. can make no better beginning than by repudiating every union in which this form of crime is found. It would also be helpful to refuse to affiliate any union whose officials are ex-convicts, and to provide automatic expulsion from the A. F. of L. of any union which, after affiliation, elects an official with a prison record.

President Green seems more indignant with denouncers of racketeering in the unions than with the racketeers. They are, in his opinion, "hireling propaganda mongers." It seems to us, rather, that the real enemy of the A. F. of L. is the man who keeps quiet about racketeering. Certainly it is not a friendly act to the A. F. of L. to stand by in silence when thieves and oppressors who prey on honest workers flaunt their affiliation with the A. F. of L.

## THE WAY TO PEACE

IN his letter to the President, the Holy Father stresses a truth which the secular commentators have overlooked. After writing that "the more economic, social, and family life is forcibly wrenched from its normal bases by the continuation of the war," the more do the common people long for peace, the Holy Father warns us that the obstacles to world peace must not be underestimated. If the friends of peace "do not wish their labors to be in vain," writes the Pontiff, they must distinctly visualize the "slight probability of immediate success, as long as the present state of the opposing forces remains essentially unchanged."

Now the Holy Father is not speaking here as an expert, expressing an opinion on naval, air and military "forces." The forces to which he refers are of a more deadly kind. How can the world reach a peace based upon justice and equity as long as Governments fail to reverence "the Divine precepts of life, as found in the Gospel of Christ"? Or, when they set these precepts aside, how can they "clear the way for a comity of nations, fair to all, efficacious, and sustained by mutual confidence"? On these questions, the ill-fated treaties which followed the last World War are a bitter commentary. Far from establishing peace, they sowed the seeds of war, because they were not based upon justice and equity.

The most formidable obstacles to peace arise, then, from a political philosophy which has rejected God and His Christ. The real enemy against whom all men of good will must unite, writes the Pope, is found in "those aggressive, deadly, godless, and anti-Christian tendencies that threaten to dry up the fountainhead whence civilization has come." The Holy Father assigns these tendencies to no one country. They are found, although in varying degree, in every nation. It is no breach of charity to observe that they manifest themselves with all but satanic perfection in Russia and Germany, and were active in those afflicted countries long before the outbreak of the recent war. But can any nation, our own included, assert with truth that it has fought "the aggressive, godless, deadly, and anti-Christian tendencies," which the Holy Father condemns as the solvents of civilization? Is Great Britain guiltless here, or France, or the Government of the United States?

The Holy Father's letter allows no nation to preen itself on its virtue, but calls all to repentance. The moral fibre of a people is gradually destroyed when practices which are condemned by the spirit and the precepts of Christ are not only not punished by law, but protected and actually fostered. In the United States, we have contributed powerfully to the breakdown of family life through lax divorce laws, more laxly administered, and to the degradation of married life through the promotion (by legal as much as by illegal means) of chemical and physical devices which bring into the home the technique of the stews. As for religion, four out of every five American children, receive no adequate

religious training, and possibly nine out of ten are in schools from which the teaching of religion is barred by law.

It is no excuse, and may be a lie, to assert that we are no worse than other nations. To lead the world to peace, we must first establish in our own country a peace that is derived from our reverence as a people for the saving precepts of the Gospel of Christ.

## BEN COHEN'S NEPHEW

SOME facts brought out at the House investigation of the National Labor Relations Board are interesting to a fascinating degree. If the Board's legal examiners may be rated by the examiners who have appeared before the Committee, it is no longer safe to permit the Board—or this Board—to appoint examiners.

One young gentleman was appointed before he had passed his bar examinations. Another applicant, described as "a young lady in a floppy red hat," won her appointment after presenting a letter in which Jerome Frank wrote that she had "turned left." A fairly familiar condition was exemplified in the lady who was unable to explain, to the satisfaction of the Committee's counsel, the charge that in reaching her decisions she went outside the record. But when we meet the young gentleman who got his appointment when some wise politician noted on the margin of his application, "Ben Cohen's nephew," we are surely in the atmosphere of back-room politics. Although the young man had been rejected by a Board official as incompetent, the magic phrase "Ben Cohen's nephew," penciled by Charles Fahy, the Board's chief legal counsel, raised him from a private chore at \$600 per year to a Federal job at \$2,800.

A certain amount of skulduggery seems inevitable in organizing any Federal agency. As long as civil service continues to be a farce, the custom is protected. It is just something with which we must put up as best we can. But an abuse that can be stopped was disclosed in the admission by one of the examiners, since promoted, that when he heard a case, he was "judge, jury, and executioner." More candid than some of his fellows, this examiner told the truth.

Precisely how such one-sided hearings by examiners can remove the causes of discord between employers and employees, one of the prime purposes of the Wagner Act, has yet to be explained by the Labor Board. The fanatics who have been administering the Act locally do not appear to realize that every injustice done to an employer will make still harder the already difficult task of defending the natural and legal rights of oppressed wage-earners.

If Ben Cohen's nephew must have a job, he should be put on the payroll of the well known firm of Cohen and Corcoran. Neither labor nor the public can tolerate him in an official position in which it is possible, and perhaps expected, for him to act as judge, jury and executioner, in the difficult cases arising under the Wagner Act.

## LOVE GUIDES US

IN the fifty-third chapter of Isaías, it is written: "Surely he hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows: and we have thought him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted." It may be that this prophecy was in the thoughts of Our Blessed Lord when He told the Apostles, in the words recorded in tomorrow's Gospel (Saint Luke, xviii, 31-43): "Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and all things shall be accomplished which were written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man." Perhaps, too, He recalled, as He spoke of His death soon to come, and of His Resurrection, the touchingly beautiful words in which the Psalmist foretold the Passion of the Saviour of mankind (xxi, lxviii.).

But the Apostles did not understand. Their minds were still full of the vision of an earthly Messianic kingdom, and of the preeminence which they were to hold in it. "And they understood none of these things, and this word was hid from them," writes Saint Luke, "and they understood not the things that were said." Our Lord was patient with His very backward scholars. He knew that they loved Him in their way, and that the time would come when all of them, save one, would glory in His Cross, and thank Him for the share He gave them in His sufferings. But now He would do something which in the dark days to come would help them to remember that He was very God. Once more He would call upon His omnipotence, and at His word the blind man along the wayside would receive his sight.

Let us not blame the Apostles, but learn from them. They were blind to the prophecies; as blind as was Bartimeus to the light of day; and blind to the truth that all who enter into Our Lord's spiritual kingdom must be prepared to endure tribulation and the shame of the Cross. But the Apostles had not seen the glory of His Resurrection. The Holy Ghost had not yet come down upon them in tongues of fire with His enlightening and strengthening gifts. But we have seen and have confessed that Christ is very God. We know that His kingdom is of the spirit, not of the ease and glory of this world. For He has told us that if we wish to be His disciples, we must take up our Cross daily, and follow Him.

Why, then, are we so blind? When trials beset us, when those who are dear to us are taken away, or, what is often more bitter, linger in poverty and disappointment, or in an agony of body for which there is no cure and little alleviation, can it not be said that our rebellion is proof that we do not understand what Our Lord has taught us? We cannot help but feel suffering, for we are human. But we can try to understand its place in the kingdom established by Him Who was in poverty and suffering from His youth, and Who ended His earthly pilgrimage on the Cross.

Blessed are they who have learned that happiness is found on the way to Calvary. His love guides those who walk in it, and in His love alone can these hungry hearts of ours find happiness.

# CHRONICLE

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**THE ADMINISTRATION.** President Roosevelt designated Secretary Morgenthau to coordinate purchases of airplanes here by the British, the French and the United States Army and Navy. . . . Speaking in Winston-Salem, N. C., Postmaster General James A. Farley declared: "I love my country better than I love the Democratic party." . . . The Most Reverend Amleto Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate, delivered to President Roosevelt in the White House the Pope's reply to the President's message. Welcoming Mr. Roosevelt's cooperation along the path of peace and his dispatch to the Vatican of a personal representative, the Holy Father praised the President for his Christmas message. The Pope, while admitting that there was now "slight probability of immediate success," declared he is continuing to dedicate his "efforts and solicitude to the purpose of re-establishing," peace. . . . In accordance with President Roosevelt's six-months' notice of abrogation, the Japanese-United States commercial treaty, made in 1911, expired on January 26. In response to a Japanese request for a working agreement to replace the expired treaty, the State Department replied that while no change in duties and tonnage rates were contemplated, the trade relations would henceforth be on a day-to-day basis and depend on future developments. Japanese "treaty merchants" here will be allowed to qualify as "business visitors." Tokyo officials charged Washington abrogated the treaty to obtain a "political club" for use against Japan. Japan is one of the largest purchasers of American goods. . . . Paul V. McNutt, Federal Security Administrator and candidate for the Democratic Presidential nomination, answering reports that his income tax returns were being investigated, asserted he welcomed any inquiry. . . . At the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy, efforts to frame a recommendation for religious instruction in public schools were defeated. The Conference in its report urged immediate ratification of the Child Labor Amendment. In submitting the Conference report to the nation, President Roosevelt suggested that the migratory families of California be settled in the Columbia Basin development. . . . Referring to "the estimate that perhaps one-half the children of this country are having no religious instruction," the President said, "it is important to consider how provision can best be made for religious training," but that "the wisdom of maintaining separation of church and State" must be kept in mind.

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**CONGRESS.** Following a cerebral hemorrhage, William E. Borah, Senator from Idaho since 1907, died in Washington on January 19, at the age of seventy-four. Foe of American entanglements in Europe, he was one of the principal battlers against

ratification of the Versailles Treaty, against United States entrance into the League of Nations. A State funeral in the Senate chamber climaxed his thirty-three year Senatorial career. . . . Characterizing the recognition of Soviet Russia as a "colossal blunder," Senator Vandenberg introduced a resolution to ask the President if Russia had carried out her pledges made in the Litvinov agreement of November 16, 1933. One pledge in that agreement promised the Soviets would not spread their propaganda in the United States. . . . The House, by a vote of 345 to 21, decreed the continuance of the Dies Committee for another year. . . . At the hearings of the House Committee investigating the National Labor Relations Board, a letter was introduced in which George O. Pratt, then one of the Board's regional examiners, declared he was "judge, jury and prosecutor" in the Kansas City district. Testimony indicated that young and inexperienced attorneys were employed by the Board. One of these, Solomon G. Lippman, commenting on a case, declared: "The company union must have been the result of 'an immaculate conception.'" After finding the Mount Vernon, Ill., Car Manufacturing Company guilty of violating the Wagner Act, the Board itself violated the law by negotiating a settlement with the company, Edmund N. Toland, counsel for the House Committee, charged. . . . A Mass of the Holy Spirit, celebrated in Washington in connection with the opening of Congress and the courts, was attended by thirteen Senators, fifty-six Representatives, numerous other officials.

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**WASHINGTON.** Following the action of the Social Security Board in withholding from Ohio for October, 1938, the Federal share in the cost of old-age pensions on the ground that Ohio was not complying with the Social Security Act, Congress passed a bill ordering that the money be given to Ohio. President Roosevelt vetoed the bill. The House sustained the veto, 153 members voting to sustain, 171 to override. . . . Donald Richberg, representing American owners of Mexican oil properties, reported that the Mexican Government is deliberately attempting to confiscate their properties, that the Mexican regime is determined not to make an equitable settlement. . . . Sale of six American merchant ships to a British firm, with transfer to British registry, was authorized by the Maritime Commission. . . . John L. Lewis, C.I.O. chieftain, predicted an "ignominious defeat" for President Roosevelt if the Democratic convention "could be coerced or dragooned into renominating him." He charged the Democratic leadership with lack "of good faith." . . . Protesting to Great Britain, the State Department declared that British treatment of American ships in the Mediterranean area was discriminatory

in that lesser delays were sustained by Italian vessels. The State Department note asserted the United States expected an "immediate correction of this situation." British officials in Bermuda continued to censor American mail taken from United States transatlantic airplanes. Stopping her purchases of American tobacco, Britain transferred her orders for tobacco to Turkey. Both Britain and France ceased buying American apples and pears, and reports indicated that Great Britain through her purchases of Argentine products was forcing that nation to buy British-manufactured articles. On a cruise around the world, the American liner *President Adams* was stopped five times by the British, who at Gibraltar fired a shot across the *Adams'* bow.

AT HOME. Declaring that freedom of speech was a "qualified and not an absolute right," the National Labor Relations Board ordered the Ford Motor Company of Somerville, Mass., to stop distributing a pamphlet critical of labor unions, alleging it constituted propaganda aimed at intimidating employees in their right of self-organization. . . . Charged by the Department of Justice with a conspiracy to violate the Sherman Anti-Trust Act by coercing employees to leave one union and join another, Joseph P. Ryan, president of the International Longshoremen's Association, together with other officials and unions, was indicted by a Federal grand jury in New York. . . . Earl Browder, general secretary of the Communist Party in the United States, was convicted in a New York Federal court of using a United States passport obtained through a false statement. He was sentenced to four years in a Federal prison and a \$2,000 fine. The Reds immediately picked Browder to run for Congress. . . . William Green, president of the A. F. of L. supported the application to President Roosevelt made by George Scalise for a restitution of his civil rights. Scalise served a prison term for white slavery, is now president of the A. F. of L. Building Service Employees Union. . . . The Rev. Charles E. Coughlin, in a Sunday broadcast declared: "While I do not belong to any unit of the Christian Front, nevertheless, I do not disassociate myself from that movement."

WAR. The 1,485-ton British destroyer *Grenville* was sunk in the North Sea with a loss of eighty-one officers and men. 118 of the crew were rescued. Either a mine or submarine later accounted for the British 1,475-ton destroyer *Exmouth*, which went to the bottom with its entire crew of 175 officers and men. . . . In the Finnish-Russian hostilities, large-scale Red offensives ceaselessly attacked the Mannerheim Line, attacked also northeast of Lake Ladoga, but without success, Helsinki reports declared, adding that Russian dead were piled high in front of the Finnish lines. On Lake Ladoga's north shore, a Soviet attempt to rescue Finn-encircled Red soldiers was halted. In the Salla sector, the Russians were reported to be checkmated. . . .

Red airmen bombed Finnish centers relentlessly, striving to destroy communication lines and civilian morale. In one day, over all Finland 450 Red bombers were counted.

THE VATICAN. The Vatican radio station broadcast three denunciations of atrocities in Poland committed by Germans and Russians. One broadcast referred to eye-witness accounts brought from Warsaw, Cracow, Pomerania, Poznan and Silesia of "horrors and incredible excesses committed upon a helpless people." Asserting the tales of cruelties coming from Russian-held Poland are heart-rending, the radio speaker declared that violent assaults on the most elementary justice are occurring in German-occupied Poland, that the Poles are being dispossessed of their land and being subjected to brutal deportations. Jews and Poles are being concentrated in separate ghettos, religion is being suppressed, Sunday service being restricted to a "bare two hours," another broadcast stated. In Gniezno, teaching of religion in the schools was forbidden, crucifixes were taken from the walls, the majority of the clergy arrested; in the districts of Inowroclaw, Szubin, Znin, Wyrzysk and Wrzesnia, all churches were closed and many priests sent to concentration camps, the radio announcer declared. Massacres of priests and civilians in various districts by the Germans were reported. In Bydgoszcz, the Gestapo broke into a convent, forced the Mother Superior to consume a Host. 400,000 Polish families were ejected from their homes to make room for Germans, a third broadcast stated. . . . In the Pontifical Directory for 1940, Myron C. Taylor is listed as "representative of His Excellency, the President of the United States of America, with the rank of Ambassador."

FOOTNOTES. The Mexican Bishops urged Catholics to seek by all peaceful means for modification of the new Mexican atheistic education law. . . . Mexico and Chile refused to join in a projected protest by South American nations against Russian invasion of Finland, and the plan was dropped. . . . Giuseppe Motta, five times President of Switzerland, a Catholic, died January 23. . . . Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek declared the Japanese-sponsored Government to be headed by former Chinese Premier Wang Ching-wei would mean the enslavement of China. . . . In France, Ignace Jan Paderewski was elected President of the Assembly of the Polish Parliament in exile. Replying to the American republics, France declared the proposed safety sea zone appeared impracticable. Former Premier J. B. M. Hertzog introduced a motion in the South African Parliament calling for a separate peace with Germany. . . . In London, Winston Churchill urged the small neutral nations to join the Allies. A strong Japanese note protested the action of a British cruiser in taking twenty-one Germans from a Japanese ship near the Japanese coast. . . . President Quezon opposed re-examination of the Philippine independence question.

# CORRESPONDENCE

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## INCREASING DIVORCE

EDITOR: In AMERICA (January 20) appears an article by Thomas P. Callaghan on divorce courts. He paints the picture in no mistaken language that the curse of divorce is on the increase in our country and that, except in a very few jurisdictions, divorce is a "commodity" which costs but little in both effort and money. It may be considered a mild indictment of both our courts and of the legal profession.

However, when one can see the ever-increasing number, even of so-called Catholics, applying for divorce, the situation becomes more alarming, and we are led to look somewhere else for the cause and for some other place to begin to apply the remedy.

Of course, we can change laws, make them more stringent, apply them more strictly; but unless the human soul is taught to react against the results, the evils, the ravages and the havoc of divorce, which it creates both materially and spiritually, I am afraid that we are going to succeed not even feebly in reducing the number of divorces our courts grind out each year.

The Church has never compromised her position in the matter, but in these days of tremendous material appeal, in these days when personal comfort and satisfaction is sought after, rather than altruism and sacrifice, the Church needs the help of those who, by their life and example, can teach their neighbor that no suffering is too great, no indignities are too humiliating, no cost is too high to preserve the solidarity, the sanctity and the happiness of the family.

Several issues past, AMERICA discussed the lay apostolate. It seems that here would be a first field for the apostolate to operate. This sore spot on the side of civilization can be eased, if not eliminated, by our lay people, not so much by preaching, for a bitter soul will not be prone to listen to talk, but by the constant picture of the sweetness, purity and virtue of their own lives.

Chicago, Ill.

FRANCIS B. ALLEGRETTI  
Judge: Superior Court

## NEUTRAL EMBARGO

EDITOR: With the expiration of the United States-Japanese Treaty of amity and commerce January 26, Senator Key Pittman plans to press his proposal to give the President authority to place an embargo on shipments of necessary war materials to Japan.

According to a *Herald-Tribune* Washington correspondent, "It is the opinion of responsible officials that these relations (with Japan) are much more strained than the American public generally realizes, and may possibly reach a grave stage after January 26.... The prospect that the United States may become involved in war with Japan is one of

the reasons why the navy is building warships on an unprecedented scale."

According to this correspondent, Washington officials are disposed because of this situation to go but little or no further in abetting the Finnish cause or risking further offense to Stalin's sensibilities.

Why should we slap an embargo on raw materials to Japan to express disapproval of her aggression in China, and at the same time try to "court" and "appease" Soviet Russia in the face of her aggression on Finland, which is fighting against even greater odds than China is? Heaven help the United States if we ever got into war with Japan, and the Soviet Union held the balance of power with both belligerents courting her favor!

The Soviet obtained from the United States, during September, 48,000 barrels of gasoline in bulk; but for the remaining three months our exports to her averaged 317,000 barrels a month. According to a *New York Times* dispatch: "The best opinion is that the gasoline is going to Russian bases for use in bombing raids and the fueling of equipment."

If the proposed embargo on Japan is justified because she has violated the Nine-Power Pact and violated the integrity of China which the United States is pledged to respect, as Senators Pittman and Schellenbach affirm, why is such an embargo not at least just as well justified against Russia because of the violation of the Soviet promises to us under the Litvinov agreements under which this country recognized the Soviet?

The chief argument against any such embargo was well expressed by Representative Holmes: "How can you stop a shipment of oil to any country and still remain neutral?"

Perhaps a way out of this difficulty would be to provide for the limitation of our export of essential war materials in the case of Russia, as well as Japan, to a to-be-specified quota roughly equivalent to their needs in peace time.

If these nations claim that such a restriction by us would be an un-neutral act, we can justly claim that on the contrary it is more strictly neutral, since we refuse to help them against their adversaries. It would not be a discriminatory embargo, but might well be a conservation by the United States of its resources for its own particular benefit, which it has a perfect right to do whenever it chooses.

New York, N. Y.

LAWRENCE J. MATTERN

## YOUTH CONTROL AMENDMENT

EDITOR: From its very title the Conference on Children in a Democracy must have been expected to refuse endorsement to a proposal for Federal control of youth. Yet, late in the afternoon of the

last session, the prepared report was amended to include a recommendation for immediate ratification of the constitutional amendment which would give Congress the power to regulate the labor of persons under eighteen years of age.

During the fifteen and one-half years this proposal has been pending before the State Legislatures, recognized authorities on constitutional law have repeatedly pointed out that the word *labor*, as used in the proposal, must be given all of its meanings, including "mental or physical exertion" and "bodily or intellectual effort."

Why give to Congress, and through Congress to one or more Federal bureaus, the power to regulate the intellectual as well as the bodily effort of every person in the nation under the age of eighteen? Has any dictator government more control of its children than this amendment would give to our Federal Government over the children in a democracy? The age eighteen, of course, includes youths.

The conference experts must have known that, with the Wage-Hour Law supplementing the protective laws of the various States, the employment of children in harmful occupations is a vanishing problem.

Why, then, recommend that the natural right of American parents to be the primary authority over the care and intellectual training of their own children, be surrendered to the Federal Government, and thus made dependent on the restraint which Congress *might* use in legislating under the broad grant of power?

Have we too many "trusting souls"? Or have too many of us forgotten all of the reasons why thirty-eight States rejected the amendment as early as 1927?

The warning given on the floor of the United States Senate, on May 31, 1924, by Senator King, of Utah, who had then but recently returned from a visit to Russia, may serve to refresh our recollection on one.

It is obvious that under the guise of the amendment they will in time take charge of the children the same as the Bolsheviks are doing in Russia and control not only their labor and their education but after a time determine whether they shall receive religious instruction or not. . . Of course, this a Communist scheme, and a lot of good people, misled, are accepting it, not knowing the full consequences which will result, and the sinister purposes back of the measure.

It is unfortunate that an otherwise enlightened conference, in its closing hours, should have been led into adopting the ill-advised recommendation of ratification.

New York, N. Y.

JOHN M. LEWIS  
Justice: Municipal Court

## PARIS CHAPEL

EDITOR: Further details are now available regarding the historicity of the chapel of the Helpers of the Holy Souls, *rue Antoinette*, Paris, in which a number of your readers has shown interest.

There is only one point which is certain. The present chapel is within a radius of from 100 to 200

yards from the site of the famous oratory where Saint Ignatius and his companions offered their vows in 1534. During the siege of Paris, 1589, the chapel was entirely destroyed. Another chapel was built in 1610. There is no indication that this latter was constructed on the exact spot of the first one. A plaster mixture was used in the building of a grotto connected with the chapel, and this novelty attracted many curious Parisians to visit it. No mention was made of this chapel being connected in any way with the first founders of the Society of Jesus.

In 1790 the second chapel was left in ruins and the grounds purchased by a business man who lost no time in disposing of every bit of the plaster debris. About 1850 the present chapel was built. Therefore it seems clear that the link of this chapel with the original, in which Ignatius made his vows, is only one of proximity.

New York, N. Y.

G. DUMAS, S.J.

## QUEST

EDITOR: Many similarly persecuted persons will applaud Katherine Brégy's dispassionate indictment (AMERICA, January 13) of importunate inquirers who poke their noses, without provocation, into the unpublished opinions and private lives of our living authors. The kind Lady Katherine, however, softens her bill of particulars by concluding as follows:

Anyway, it makes one glad to be a living author. For to have one's work understood and interpreted in all its strength and weakness, its secret nuances, what it "aspired to be and was not" . . . there is only one joy on earth, and perhaps one other in Heaven, greater than that!

These final phrases aroused my curiosity beyond all bounds. What could be that one greater joy on earth? What could be that one hypothetical and greater joy in Heaven?

Most attentive to your living author's detailed instructions for finding the answers to questions about persons of her exalted station, I consulted the latest and the best *Who's Who*. But to no avail. I reread all the passages in the Brégy publications, most likely to contain a reply, howsoever indirect, to satisfy my curiosity. Again in vain. I followed every clue to be found in the *Readers' Guide*. And yet no success. I did more. I reviewed those articles in Saint Thomas which enumerate and explain the components of the bliss of the blessed. It was still impossible to determine accurately to what specific joys your esteemed contributor may have referred.

I am of course too frightened by the Lady Katherine's recent rebuke to address a personal inquiry to her good self, at least for the present. But my curiosity persists. What can those hidden joys really be? And if it is unfair to pose the question, was it not also unfair to provoke it? I surmise, furthermore, that Katherine Brégy's own answer to this query, if one is forthcoming, can be the best piece of Catholic literature within two or three generations.

Woodstock, Md.

JOSEPH T. CLARK, S.J.

# BOOKS

## CLASSIC WORK ON THE SCIENCE OF SOCIETY

FUNDAMENTAL SOCIOLOGY. By Eva J. Ross, Ph.D. The Bruce Publishing Co. \$3

THE authority gained for Dr. Ross by her previous works: *A Survey of Sociology*, *Rudiments of Sociology* and *What Is Economics*, as well as by her appearances at gatherings of American sociologists is such that her latest and very much more complete work in this field needs little introduction.

Dr. Ross for some time past has clearly and persistently raised the issue as to the nature of sociology itself. She has insisted upon defining the point upon which the Catholic sociologist is to stand, if he is to merit the name of sociologist and be genuinely Catholic. This book is a concrete answer to her own question. Just a further word to illustrate Dr. Ross' position.

Up to the present, she observes "very few Catholic writers have taken sufficient note of the inductive side of the science, and were either social philosophers, or applied sociologists interested in the theory of social work rather than in the science of sociology." Dr. Ross refuses to be led astray by the usual line of opposition between the inductive or fact-finding social scientist on the one hand and the social philosopher on the other. To the former, she insists that "the Catholic writer who makes use of truths arrived at by deduction to interpret his deductive findings, is not necessarily less scientific than the non-Catholic." On the other hand, the Catholic sociologist "may with advantage employ the positive method, examine social facts scientifically and from them draw scientific conclusions." The Catholic, however, does not make the unwarranted assumptions of the materialistic sociologists: that man is an automaton or a mere accident; that "right" is a mere matter of custom; or that the individual must be merged into society. The Catholic bases his sociology on certain postulates and certain fundamental conclusions which he draws from these postulates; and this process in no wise impairs the complete objectivity of his scientific method.

With this understood, says Dr. Ross, we can present "a science of society, which is not only scientific from the inductive viewpoint, but which also takes into consideration what the Catholic considers as basic postulates, and the findings of social philosophy, necessary for the consideration of any man's activities."

To cover in one moderate-sized volume the immense field which so broad a concept opens up would seem impossible, but it has been accomplished, and done with such clarity of thought and ease of style that Dr. Ross' book goes considerably beyond the requirements of a textbook and is pleasant reading for the uninitiated. Each of the twenty-eight principal topics treated in the course of her exposition is so solidly and lucidly disposed of as to give the impression of being a monograph on a matter in which the author is particularly interested. Much of this clarity is aided by the three-fold main division of the work: the Bases of Sociology, treating of such topics as biological inheritance; character, personality and environment, man and culture, the origin of man; Social Institutions, such as the Family, the State, Religious Society, Occupational Society, etc.; and the Social Problems of our times.

Among the social problems Dr. Ross has, again, covered a wide field. She discusses the various problems of industrial life, and matters of crime, poverty and dependency, and also the rural problems; eugenics and population problems, and devotes a special chapter to immigration and race problems. Her chapter on the

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race problem is the most complete and accurate which, to my knowledge, has yet appeared in any general Catholic treatise on sociology. Each of the twenty-eight chapters is supplied with a good working bibliography and questions for study-club use, and the book is thoroughly indexed.

Some idea of the work's scope may be derived from a casual mention of a few topics treated in its course. The relation of personality and character to heredity is discussed, as is the part of thought and will in molding character. Geographic environment is appraised as to its influence upon the individual. Culture is founded upon the individual, not as a mystic entity. The basis of tolerance is keenly distinguished as deriving from the person, not from his error. Many of the knotty points in the social history of marriage are unraveled; and the social significance of the Christian ideal is explained. Careful distinction is made between the *natural* institutions, such as the family and the State, and the *primary* institutions, such as occupational society. Erroneous theories as to the origin of religion (magic, animism, fetishism, etc.) are ably disposed of. The author's economic training is seen in her treatment of the single-tax theory, the family allowance, the remedies for unemployment, workers' cooperatives, etc. Practical suggestions are made for Catholic Action with regard to social problems.

Dr. Ross has supplied the type of work for which our colleges, and our Catholic reading public who are in any way interested in social questions, have long felt the need. I believe that it will steadily grow in the appreciation of this same public.

JOHN LAFARGE

## OF TOPICAL INTEREST AMONG THE BEST SELLERS

VERDUN. By Jules Romains. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.  
\$2.50

NO ARMS, NO ARMOUR. By Robert Henriques. Farrar  
and Rinehart. \$2.50

Of all the books on the most recent list of the best sellers these two are of the greatest topical interest, the best written and the most significant from the point of view of the critical reader. Although they differ in technique and in merit and deal with two very separate cultures they have much in common. Both are concerned with war and the psychology of the soldier and both penetrate the spiritual haze which has wrapped Europe like a shroud ever since 1914.

Jules Romains needs no introduction to an American audience. *Verdun* is the eighth volume in his Men of Good Will series and by all odds the best of the lot. It is not a plotted narrative, has no hero, is not propaganda and submits to no literary classification. It is rather a panorama of one of the most important phases of the late conflict, a total picture of war composed of related and unrelated fragments of experience which taken together form a coherent idea of the chaos and the scientific mass suicide of the Western European races. The only pattern in the book is the clarifying habit of the artist philosopher. Romains has not sought some subtle explanation for the war, nor has he arranged his material to make any single ideological inference inescapable. What he has managed to do is to make us see the war at one of its supreme crises through the eyes of generals and subalterns and private soldiers, politicians, profiteers and proletarians, Frenchmen and Germans and neutrals, and to force home the realization that it is a monstrous and unnatural thing for men to kill each other for such mixed and obscure motives.

The philosophic character of the book is of a high order. It is not that Romains attempts to illustrate his ideas. Rather he is continually aware that the vital forces in world conflict are of a cultural rather than of a purely physical nature. Each man is fighting his own private war and abdicates his own will for his own pri-

vate reason. Hence the book is rich in fundamental questionings, not of the lush pseudo-Platonic kind, but of a sharp and moving realism. By employing a multiplicity of techniques, straight historical narration, philosophic dialogs, expert and intelligible stream of consciousness, ironic comment, and many other devices, the author explains everything and justifies nothing.

It would be wrong, however, to suppose that *Verdun* is spotted with philosophic birthmarks. The surface of the writing is smooth and the individual chapters are superbly competent on the merely literal level. The analogy is completely unobtrusive. Those readers with an appetite for factual accuracy and large scale description are rewarded by vivid battle scenes which have elicited the praise of Pétain himself. Then there are lyric passages of great beauty and compassionate understanding—everything, in fact, save the sentimentalism which has characterized so much of the current-war fiction up to the present.

*No Arms, No Armour* deals with a more limited problem from a less universal point of view. Major Henriques' prize winner is a chronological thesis story, packed with incidental adventure and military comment. As one might expect from a first novel it does not bear much comparison with the style of *Verdun*, nor is it as rich in allusion. The book tells the story of Tubby Windrush, a young lieutenant with all the physical and intellectual traits of the public-school gentleman. It is elaborately obvious that he does not think and that he has been molded by schoolmasters who have stressed character rather than intellect. A favorite with the traditional old guard in the army who judge an officer by his seat on a horse and the cut of breeches, he begins his education when he is assigned to a battery commanded by a philosophizing major. The major and a cynical, disillusioned fellow officer named Watson, together with Lydia and several months in the desert, shake Tubby loose from his conventional habits. The end of the book finds Tubby a very confused and troubled person, hardly master of his own thoughts, without arms or armour against fate.

Such a pattern is not very original. The study of a young man in revolt has been a staple of fiction ever since the nineteen hundreds; and criticism of the brass hats, the Cliveden Set and the public-school oligarchy in general is public policy for the average British novelist. The important part of the criticism, therefore, does not consist in the revelation of snobbery and inefficiency in high places, which can almost always be taken for granted, or in the superficial idea of "character" which is supposedly the hallmark of the British upper classes, but in the antithesis of this snobbery, inefficiency and character.

When Tubby is vaccinated with skepticism as a consequence of his associations he begins to question the whole public-school code. He abandons not only the shibboleths but also many moral principles of society and pursues the idea of truth and beauty and God under the stars of the desert. In exchange for his innocence he receives only the conviction that the human personality, much less the world, is an impenetrable mystery. There he ends. When on his return to England Lydia asks him "... what are you?" he replies, "Blessed if I know ... scarcely a soldier."

This is very old brew, but it is important as a revelation of the failure of the Englishman to solve the problem first presented a quarter century ago. Ideals conceived in the light of clear moral principles are equally misunderstood by those who attempt to apply them and those who do not, because the principles from which they sprang have long since disappeared. Tubby's attempt to think things through is very pathetic and the author's exposition and comment is no more successful. The slightest of Jules Romains' essays on the meaning of life explains more than the whole content of *No Arms, No Armour*. Nevertheless, Major Henriques' book shares with *Verdun* a common seriousness of purpose and a common understanding of the function of the novel. Both books ask fundamental questions and sting rather than soothe the reader.

FRANCIS X. CONNOLLY

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## BOOKS IN BRIEFER REVIEW

HAPPY DAYS. By H. L. Mencken. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. \$2.75

WRITTEN with evident self-enjoyment, because boyhood memories are still fresh, *Happy Days* is a delightful book. It is the story of H. L. Mencken's very early years, told with delicious humor and good nature. For the serious-minded there is value in the book also as history. It records in considerable detail the now incredible world which was America fifty years ago—without telephone or technicolor—before airplane or radio or automobile were necessities of life. The scene is Baltimore in the eighties, but save for some slight local coloring (the negro gave such to Baltimore in a real sense) the tale is typical of any American city of the day.

The older of two sons of a German emigre who prospered in the business of manufacturing tobacco, Mencken's boyhood was normal enough. He indulged in all the pranks of boys, including petty thievery from neighborhood stores, had close affiliations with the gang of his vicinity for reasons of self-preservation, took piano lessons and hated cops. Part of his informal education was gained in the old-fashioned saloon, where he was perched on the brass rail and permitted to indulge to his heart's content in sarsaparilla and pretzels, the while his father drank beer, and debated the problems of the day. His religious education, if it could be called such, was less than perfunctory.

The charm of the book is the relish with which Mencken recounts his boyhood. It is clear he loved to throw stones, for example, and still loves to recall the time when he did throw stones. Possibly it is the boy in the man who has been throwing stones, in print, all his life, not maliciously, but out of youthful deviltry. There are in the book occasional flippancies about religion which make one wince. Again it is probably the boy in the man who writes thus. For Mencken's education did not include reverence for the supernatural.

ROBERT A. HEWITT

SHEPHERD OF SOULS. By Constantine Noppel, S.J. B. Herder Book Co. \$2

PASTORAL theology, as a science, treats of those principles and their applications by which Christ's plan of salvation is to be accomplished through the medium of His priests. Since Christ has said: "I am the Vine and you are the branches," all priestly vitality must stem from Christ. Despite the experience of two thousand years, the Church preserves a vitality and freshness that is unique.

This vitality must permeate every parish priest. Priestly zeal is dynamic and alive when it outpours itself not only in the administrative care and direction of souls in general but also awakens and stimulates to life and action every member of the flock. Besides God's Grace, apostolic prudence and much patience complement a well-balanced zeal.

Nothing sensational or theatrical mars this book. With clarity and dignity the author deepens and vitalizes the pastoral knowledge of a priest. Based on actual experience it fulfills a peculiar need of our times by welding together the pastor and his flock more closely in the unity of the Mystical Body of Christ.

FRANCIS GRIFFIN

LUKE'S CIRCUS. By Ruth Manning-Sanders. Little, Brown and Co. \$2.50

HAD the writer of this novel exercised more restraint in her descriptions of sex, her book could be recommended, but the reader must be warned that it contains highly colored scenes of passion that menace the innocent.

From childhood Luke Castle dreams of emulating his grandfather, the great Lucio Castelli of circus fame.

Marta, his great-aunt, lives near him and carries on the family tradition in her thoughts and partly in her gipsy-like way of living. But Luke's mother regrets that she married into such a family and, with her husband dead, she tries to bring up her two boys to gentility, supporting them by sewing. John, the elder son, follows his mother, but Luke feels the surge of his Italian blood in an insistent ambition to create and promote a circus of his own. In the subsequent development of the story the author shows particular mastery of narrative and the element of suspense.

At first his thwarted impulses merely make him a sour and unruly boy, but once launched on the stream of circus activities he is tireless in energy and rich in resourcefulness, rising slowly from groom to tumbler and to wire artist and owner of a small but promising show. After the ruin brought by the World War he starts over and rises to a height where he can feel justified in claiming that his life's ambition has been achieved.

The story shows intimate acquaintance with the lives of those who spend themselves for the entertainment of others and it is well sustained by heroic deeds of devotion to duty and by the excitement stirred by such scenes as the stampede of elephants and the rebellion of lions and bears.

WILLIAM A. DOWD

STOCKBRIDGE, 1739-1939. By Sarah Cabot Sedgwick and Christina Sedgwick Marquand. \$2.75

STOCKBRIDGE in the Berkshires has been called the last summer stronghold of New England's aristocratic and conservative families. In this work the authors show how it has also been a stage on which each generation of American life has played its part since the earliest pre-Revolutionary days. Originally, a Puritan Mission for the Indians, it was gradually taken over by the migrating Pilgrim Fathers whose Puritanism soon yielded to the fiery sermons of their new pastor, Jonathan Edwards, and then mellowed under the less Calvinistic teaching of William Ellery Channing. Today, Stockbridgeans, relying on their un-Puritan stocks, still believe in their nineteenth century Wellsian ideal of the perfectibility of man without the grace of God. It is America's ivory tower unaffected by the twentieth century, but the authors have brought to life a vivid historical panorama that is thoroughly interesting reading and an accurately documented study of American life and ideals from their earliest beginnings.

CHARLES B. TOOMEY

GOVERNMENT AND ECONOMIC LIFE. VOLUME I. By Leverett S. Lyon, Myron W. Watkins, and Victor Abramson. Brookings Institution. \$3

THE stature of *Government and Economic Life* is hardly open to question. It is tremendous. Alert students will warmly welcome it as a treasure of historical, political and economic wealth. The trends and current issues which characterize the relations between the National Government and our industrial life are analyzed according to the functional approach. The work begins with the basic concepts of economic life, government and the relations between the two, and then ramifies into two major divisions: implementation and regulation. In the course of the volume the anti-trust laws, money and labor are accorded detailed treatment, not to mention competition, bankruptcy laws, etc.

The functional approach has the advantage of eschewing theoretical knots, while it admits taking cognizance of an underlying theory motivating a movement. It enhances the chances for an unbiased presentation of the data and does not bind the authors in their interpretation of events. In the present work the authors quite definitely do not propose to solve problems, nor do they, at least, explicitly espouse a set of rules or maxims calculated to produce a bigger and better America. Rather they seek to set down the trends and issues in sequence and leave it to the reader to integrate these facts with his own fundamental philosophy.

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# THEATRE

**THE MALE ANIMAL.** A new theatrical hit has come to town. It is titled *The Male Animal*; it is written by James Thurber and Elliott Nugent; it is on the stage of the Cort Theatre; and—hold your hat now, gentle reader, and do not get excited—it turns but briefly on the troubles of two young men wrongly suspected of sympathizing with Communists and Communism.

One of the suspects is a college professor and the other a college undergraduate who is editor of the college paper. The latter republishes Vanzetti's last letter, because the young professor admires its simple English prose. That is all there is to it, but in the subsequent storm that breaks over their young heads for apparent sympathy with Communism, both turn stubborn and refuse to defend themselves. In the end the young editor finally admits that he is not a Communist, has never been a Communist, and is acquainted with only one Communist in the world. The young professor does not even know a Communist, but is resentful because he is having trouble with his girl wife.

All this is only a small and really unimportant part of the comedy, which has to do with love and rivalry and campus politics, with jealousy and football and ambition and trustees, and with other major interests of college life. That being understood, let us return to the comedy, which is a joyous bit of nonsense. Elliott Nugent is also the leading player in the comedy, heading a fine cast of players who keep the fun alive from the rise of the curtain to its final fall.

The plot of the play? Well, if you must have it—but it is a bit confused at times, with so many different elements entering into it. There is the young professor's jealousy over the reappearance of his wife's former friend, a famous football player. There is the young undergraduate who has simply got to print what he thinks, even if he does not always know what he is thinking. There is the scene of intoxicated discussion between two young men who try to drown their worries in talk and drink. Nothing so good of its kind has been seen since Alfred Lunt and Noel Coward gave us a similar scene in a Coward play years ago.

There is a colored maid, played by Amanda Randolph, who is a whole comedy in herself, and there is a football episode, done in pantomime by Leon Ames, who is given the whole stage to do it in and deserves it. There is an absent-minded and dreamy dean who for forty years has been vainly trying to inject knowledge into the heads of young men; there is a cantankerous trustee who is downed in the end.

The plot, gentle reader? How you do harp on that! But you see the authors did not, so it is a bit hard to give a synopsis. Why not let it go with the statement that there is a football game going on off stage, and two love affairs and half a dozen misunderstandings going on up and down stage, and that the audience is happy the whole time, and that the characters are also happy at the finish.

Young Mr. Nugent carries off the honors, but Ivan Simpson is incomparable as the vague dean, and Don De Fore, (whose name I would change if I could), Robert Scott, Michael Baines and Matt Briggs, all give us plenty of laughs.

The women are not given such appealing lines and situations as the men have. Ruth Matteson, who looks as Zona Gale looked in her youth, is excellent as the young professor's wife. Gene Tierney as her younger sister also rises gallantly to the few opportunities offered her. All the acting is done in one room—the living room of the Turner cottage—and Aline Bernstein has made an attractive setting for it. All of which means that we have our first star success since the theatrical frost fell early in December.

ELIZABETH JORDAN

# FILMS

**THE BLUE BIRD.** It is an unfortunate characteristic of modern children that they seldom know the facts of the next life, and Maurice Maeterlinck's purely natural allegory contains at least one episode which may account for this ignorance. When two children, in search of the blue bird which symbolizes happiness, think of their kindly grandparents, long since dead, the latter awaken momentarily from oblivion and enjoy a dream-like revival. The incident, charming enough in itself, is as weak and flat as a Greek myth compared to Christian reality. Strangely enough, parents insist that their children's instruction be realistic in everything except the things that matter. However, this beautifully produced fantasy is highly acceptable on its own Hollywoodian terms, and Walter Lang has pointed out the natural virtues involved as the discontented Mytlyl learns that happiness is an attitude of mind and not a matter of possessions. Shirley Temple, in a more than usually substantial rôle, plays with a firm grasp of its subtle changes. Johnny Russell and Sybil Jason are effective juveniles, while Spring Byington, Eddie Collins, Gale Sondergaard, Nigel Bruce, Jessie Ralph and Cecilia Loftus lend sterling adult support. How much of the film's moralizing will prove digestible to young minds is unknown, but merely as a colorful whimsy, the production is of high order. (Twentieth Century-Fox)

**REMEMBER THE NIGHT.** According to this entertainment example, the human touch can redeem triteness of plot far better than the injected humor of sophisticated dialog. Perhaps this picture will shift the fashion from desiccated smartness to simple, even sentimental humanity. The plot follows the regeneration of a shop-lifter after a sympathetic assistant district attorney has given her a glimpse of real home life in the bosom of his family. She enters upon her prison term thereafter with the cheering prospect of matrimony awaiting her release. To director Mitchell Leisen goes credit for preserving an admittedly tearful tale from clumsy bathos, and the same quality of restraint is noticeable in the acting. Barbara Stanwyck and Fred MacMurray play with sincere conviction. This is an unpretentious drama which will repay adult patronage. (Paramount)

**CONGO MAISIE.** Sequels are a way of finding out what you did not like about a picture in the first place. They invariably perpetuate the worst features of their predecessors, and this film is not exceptional in this or any other regard. Carrying over the brash character of a cafe entertainer, the plot wades into a new series of adventures which bear no relationship to Maisie's past activities. This time she finds herself a stowaway on an African river boat and momentarily ends her career as the wife and chief assistant of an experimenting physician in the jungle. Henry Potter's direction emphasizes Maisie's hardness to some comic advantage but in so doing undermines belief in a rather noble climax. Ann Sothern's portrait of the heroine is accurately vulgar, and John Carroll, Rita Johnson and Shepherd Strudwick are capable in an adult comedy which will not bear exacting inspection. (MGM)

**BROTHER RAT AND THE BABY.** The familiar characters who first disturbed the peace of the Virginia Military Academy run into difficulties of their own in this comedy. Suffering a natural change, the cadets have become wage-earners with all the attendant trials. Ray Enright's rapid direction is hampered by patches of dull dialog and weak humor, but Priscilla Lane, Wayne Morris and the youthful cast make the most of their few opportunities in an adult program-filler. (Warner)

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# EVENTS

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INTERPRETERS of the modern scene believed they sensed behind the outstanding events of the week a hidden, precedent-smashing force that was striving to upset all the accustomed modes of life. . . . To support their contention, these interpreters pointed to the fact that Satan's Kingdom, a Connecticut town, was the coldest spot in the whole State whereas one would have expected it to be the warmest. . . . In Michigan, they added, men used a snowplow instead of fire engines to put out a fire, the revolving blades of the plow hurling snow on the blaze. . . . At the wedding of a photographer in Chattanooga, Tenn., (the interpreters testified) the crowd instead of showing their admiration and affection for the bride and groom by throwing rice, old shoes and ancient tin cans at them—the hitherto accepted mode of expressing devotion at nuptials—manifested their love by hurling 500 flashlight bulbs at the blushing newly-weds. . . . Snowstorms were losing their way, these outstanding events analyzers declared. Evidently threatened by fog, a snowstorm instead of landing in New England, made a safe landing in Georgia and later took off for the North. . . . Although Great Britain was supposed to have erected an airtight blockade, the analyzers said, a shipment of rat poison and spoiled Gruyere cheese slipped through the blockade and arrived in Germany, relieving the severe shortage of rat poison and spoiled cheese in that land. . . . In a dispute as to whether a recently purchased mule had a defective lower jaw, a Kentucky judge ordered that the animal be brought into court and made to stand before the jury, the analyzers asserted, adding that though it was not the first time a jackass had been present in an American court room, it was the first time a mule had been. . . .

In a Long Island public school, the instructor killed a pig while several hundred eighth-grade pupils looked on. This manifestation of slaughter-house technique is a product of the new "progressive" education. After the pig was dead, the teacher pointed out the animal's vital organs and the children drew pictures of them. . . . The idea of adding a course in pig-killing to the high-school curriculum is something new, the interpreters of outstanding events disclosed, as they ventured the opinion that the stockyard atmosphere being filtered into our school system by "progressive" education will produce revolutionary changes in the world of letters. Abattoirs may become an essential part of every school, they said. The problems of parents may be increased. When little Johnny has to skin a cat for home-work, he may seek the aid of his father. Since the father, no doubt, attended school when the old, out-moded ideas of education held sway, he very likely will not know how to skin cats and will be forced to expose his ignorance in front of his own son. Children will be ashamed of their parents' lack of education, and the parents, in self-defense, may be forced in droves to attend "progressive" education night schools in order to acquire the education which they missed in their youth. . . .

On the other hand, the interpreters said, the interest of the children in their school work will be much greater than it was in the old days. If Mama thinks Johnny has a cold and should stay home from school, Johnny will probably protest: "Oh, no, mommy, teacher's going to choke a squirrel today and I'm back now in my squirrel-choking credits." Learning to read, write and think is less interesting than learning how to stick a pig, but, the analyzers said, on graduation the children will probably be uneducated, as the moral and mental discipline inculcated by pig-sticking and allied courses is negligible. One wonders whether the new technique is either progressive or educational.

THE PARADE